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THE

WORKS

OF

LAURENCE STERNE;

IN FOUR VOLUMES:

CONTAINING

THE LIFE AND OPINIONS
OF TRISTRAM SHANDY, GENT.;

A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY
THROUGH FRANCE AND ITALY;

SERMONS, LETTERS, &c.

WITH

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A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

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SERMONS

BY

LAURENCE STERNE, A. M.

SERMON XXXIII.

ROMANS, II. 4.

Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering—knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

So says St. Paul. And

ECCLESIASTES, VIII. 11.

Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily; therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.—

TAKE either as you like it, you will get nothing by the bargain.—

'Tis a terrible character of the world, which Solomon is here accounting for,—that their hearts were fully set in them to do evil.—And the general outcry against the wickedness of the age, in every age from Solomon's down to this, shews but too lamentably what grounds have all along been given for the complaint.—

The disorder and confusion arising in the affairs of the world, from the wickedness of it, being ever such,—so evidently seen, so severely felt, as naturally to induce every one who was a spectator or a sufferer, to give the melancholy preference to the times he lived in; as if the corruptions of men's manners had not only exceeded the reports of former days, but the power almost of rising above the pitch to which the wickedness of the age was ar-

rived.—How far they may have been deceived in such calculations, I shall not inquire;—let it suffice, that mankind have ever been bad,—considering what motives they have had to be better;—and taking this for granted, instead of declaiming against it, let us see whether a discourse may not be as serviceable, by endeavouring, as Solomon has here done, rather to give an account of it, and by tracing back the evils to their first principles, to direct ourselves to the true remedy against them.—

Let it here be only premised,—that the wickedness either of the present or past times, whatever scandal and reproach it brings upon Christians,—ought not in reason to reflect dishonour upon Christianity, which is so apparently well-framed to make us good;—that there is not a greater paradox in nature,—than that so good a religion should be no better recommended by its professors.—Though this may seem a paradox,—'tis still, I say, no objection, though it has often been made use of against Christianity;—since, if the morals of men are not reformed, it is not owing to a defect in the revelation, but 'tis owing to the same causes which defeated all the use and intent of reason,—before revelation was given.—For setting aside the obligation which a divine law lays upon us—whoever considers the state and condition of human nature, and upon this view, how much stronger the natural motives are to virtue than to vice, would expect to find the world much better than it is, or ever has been.—For who would suppose the generality of

mankind to betray so much folly, as to act against the common interests of their own kind, as every man does who yields to the temptation of what is wrong?—But, on the other side,—if men first look into the practice of the world, and there observe the strange prevalency of vice, and how willing men are to defend as well as to commit it, one would think they believed that all discourses of virtue and honesty were mere matter of speculation for men to entertain some idle hours with;—and say truly, that men seemed universally to be agreed in nothing but in speaking well and doing ill.—But this casts no more dishonor upon reason than it does upon revelation;—the truth of the case being this,—that no motives have been great enough to restrain those from sin who have secretly loved it, and only sought pretences for the practice of it.—So that if the light of the gospel has not left a sufficient provision against the wickedness of the world,—the true answer is, that there can be none.—'Tis sufficient that the excellency of Christianity in doctrine and precepts, and its proper tendency to make us virtuous as well as happy, is a strong evidence of its divine original,—and these advantages it has above any institution that ever was in the world:—it gives the best directions, the best examples, the greatest encouragements,—the best helps, and the greatest obligations to gratitude.—But as religion was not to work upon men by way of force and natural necessity, but by moral persuasion,—which sets good and evil before them;—so that, if men have

power to do evil, or choose the good, and will abuse it, this cannot be avoided;—not only religion, but even reason itself, must necessarily imply a freedom of choice; and all the beings in the world which have it, were created free to stand or free to fall:—and therefore men that will not be wrought upon by this way of address, must expect, and be contented, to feel the stroke of that rod which is prepared for the back of fools, oft-times in this world, but undoubtedly in the next, from the hands of a righteous governor, who will finally render to every man according to his works.—

Because this sentence is not always executed speedily, is the wise man's account of the general licentiousness which prevailed through the race of mankind,—so early as his days; and we may allow it a place, amongst the many other fatal causes of deprivation in our own;—a few of which I shall beg leave to add to this explication of the wise man's; subjoining a few practical cautions in relation to each, as I go along.—

To begin with Solomon's account in the text,—that because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil.—

It seems somewhat hard to understand the consequence why men should grow more desperately wicked,—because God is merciful and gives them space to repent;—this is no natural effect,—nor does the wise man intend to insinuate, that the goodness and long-suffering of God is the cause of

the wickedness of man, by a direct efficacy to harden sinners in their course.—But the scope of his discourse is this, Because a vicious man escapes at present, he is apt to draw false conclusions from it, and, from the delay of God's punishments in this life, either to conceive them at so remote a distance, or perhaps so uncertain, that, though he has some doubtful misgivings of the future, yet he hopes, in the main, that his fears are greater than his danger;—and, from observing some of the worst of men both live and die without any outward testimony of God's wrath,—draws from thence some flattering ground of encouragement for himself, and, with the wicked in the psalm, says in his heart, Tush? I shall never be cast down, there shall no harm happen unto me:—as if it was necessary, if God is to punish at all, that he must do it presently;—which, by the way, would rather seem to bespeak the rage and fury of an incensed party, than the determination of a wise and patient judge,—who respites punishment to another state, declaring for the wisest reasons, this is not the time for it to take place in,—but that he has appointed a day for it, wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, and make such unalterable distinctions betwixt the good and bad,—as to render his future judgment a full vindication of his justice.—

That mankind have ever made an ill use of this forbearance, is, and I fear will ever be, the case:—and St. Peter, in his description of the scoffers in the latter days, who, he tells us, shall walk after

their own lusts (the worst of all characters), he gives the same sad solution of what should be their unhappy encouragement;—for that they would say,—Where is the promise [where is the threatening or declaration of ἡ ἐπαγγελία] of his coming,—for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation;—that is, the world goes on in the same uninterrupted course, where all things fall alike to all without any interposition from above,—or any outward token of divine displeasure:—upon this ground, "Come ye," say they, as the prophet represents them, "I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink: and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant."—

Now, if you consider, you will find, that all this false way of reasoning doth arise from that gross piece of self-flattery, that such do imagine God to be like themselves,—that is, as cruel and revengeful as they are,—and they presently think, if a fellow-creature offended them at the rate that sinners are said to offend God, and they had as much power in their hands to punish and torture them as he has, they would be sure to execute it speedily;—but because they see God does it not, therefore they conclude that all the talk of God's anger against vice, and his future punishment of it,—is mere talk, calculated for the terror of old women and children.—Thus speak they peace to their souls, when there is no peace;—for though a sinner, (which the wise man adds by way of caution after the text,)—for though a sinner do evil a hun-

dred times, and his days be prolonged upon the earth,—yet sure I know, that it shall be well with them that fear God,—but shall not be well with the wicked.—Upon which argument, the Psalmist, speaking in the name of God,—uses this remonstrance to one under this fatal mistake which has misled thousands;—These things thou didst, and I kept silence:—And it seems this silence was interpreted into consent;—for it follows,—and thou thoughtest I was altogether such a one as thyself. —But the Psalmist adds, how ill he took this at men's hands, and that they should not know the difference between the forbearance of sinners,—and his neglect of their sins;—but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee.—Upon the whole of which, he bids them be better advised, and consider, lest while they forget God, he pluck them away, and there be none to deliver them.—

Thus much for the first ground and cause which the text gives, why the hearts of the sons of men are so fully set in them to do evil; upon which I have only one or two cautions to add—That, in the first place, we frequently deceive ourselves in the calculation that sentence shall not be speedily executed. By sad experience, vicious and debauched men find this matter to turn out very different in practice from their expectations in theory: God having so contrived the nature of things throughout the whole system of moral duties, that every vice, in some measure, should immediately revenge itself upon the doer; that falsehood, and

unfair dealing ends in distrust and dishonor;—that drunkenness and debauchery should weaken the thread of life, and cut it so short that the transgressor shall not live out half his days; that pride should be followed by mortifications; extravagance by poverty and distress; that the revengeful and malicious should be the greatest tormentor of himself, the perpetual disturbance of his own mind being so immediate a chastisement, as to verify what the wise man says upon it, That, as the merciful man does good to his own soul, so he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.

In all which cases there is a punishment independent of these, and that is, the punishment which a man's own mind takes upon itself, from the remorse of doing what is wrong.—Prima est hæc ultio,—this is the first revenge which (whatever other punishments he may escape) is sure to follow close upon his heels, and haunts him wheresoever he goes:—for whenever a man commits a wilful bad action,—he drinks down poison, which though it may work slowly, will work surely, and give him perpetual pains and heart-aches,—and if no means be used to expel it, will destroy him at last.—So that, notwithstanding that final sentence of God is not executed speedily in exact weight and measure,—there is nevertheless a sentence executed, which a man's own conscience pronounces against him;—and every wicked man, I believe, feels as regular a process within his own breast commenced against himself, and finds himself as much accused, and as evidently and impartially

condemned for what he has done amiss, as if he had received sentence before the most awful tribunal;—which judgment of conscience, as it can be looked upon in no other light but as an anticipation of that righteous and unalterable sentence which will be pronounced hereafter, by that Being to whom he is finally to give an account of his actions—I cannot conceive the state of his mind under any character than of that anxious doubtfulness described by the prophet,—That the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and filth.

A second caution against this uniform ground of false hope, in sentence not being executed speedily, will arise from this consideration,—That in our vain calculation of this distant point of retribution, we generally respite it to the day of judgment; and as that may be a thousand or ten thousand years off, it proportionably lessens the terror.—To rectify this mistake, we should first consider that the distance of a thing no way alters the nature of it. —2dly, That we are deceived in this distant prospect, not considering that however far off we may fix it in this belief, that in fact it is no farther off from every man than the day of his own death.— And how certain that day is, we need not surely be reminded:—'Tis the certainty of the matter, and of an event which will as surely come to pass, as that the sun shall rise to-morrow morning, that should enter as much into our calculations, as if it was hanging over our heads.—For though in our fond imaginations, we dream of living many years

upon the earth; how unexpectedly are we summoned from it?—How oft, in the strength of our age, in the midst of our projects,—when we are promising ourselves the ease of many years?—how oft at that very time, and in the height of this imagination, is the decree sealed, and the commandment gone forth to call us into another world?—

This may suffice for the examination of this one great cause of the corruption of the world;—from whence I should proceed, as I purposed, to an inquiry after some other unhappy causes which have a share in this evil.—But I have taken up so much more of your time in this than I first intended,—that I shall defer what I have to say to the next occasion, and put an end to this discourse, by an answer to a question often asked, relatively to this argument, in prejudice of christianity, which cannot be more seasonably answered than in a discourse at this time;—and that is,—Whether the christian religion has done the world any service in reforming the lives and morals of mankind,—which some, who pretend to have considered the present state of vice, seem to doubt of?—This objection I, in some measure, have anticipated in the beginning of this discourse,—and what I have to add to that argument is this,—that as it is impossible to decide the point by evidence of facts, which at so great a distance cannot be brought together and compared,—it must be decided by reason, and the probability of things; upon which issue, one might appeal to the most

professed deist, and trust him to determine,—whether the lives of those who are set loose from all obligations,—but those of conveniency,—can be compared with those who have been blest with the extraordinary light of a religion?—and whether so just and holy a religion as the christian, which sets restraints even upon our thoughts,—a religion which gives us the most engaging ideas of the perfections of GOD,—at the same time that it impresses the most awful ones of his majesty and power;—a Being rich in mercies, but if they are abused, terrible in his judgments;—one constantly about our secret paths,—about our beds;—who spieth out all our ways,—noticeth all our actions, and is so pure in his nature, that he will punish even the wicked imaginations of the heart, and has appointed a day wherein he will enter into this inquiry, and execute judgment according as we have deserved.

If either the hopes or fears, the passions or reason of men are to be wrought upon at all, such principles must have an effect, though, I own, very far short of what a thinking man should expect from such motives.

No doubt, there is great room for amendment in the christian world,—and the professors of our holy religion may in general be said to be a very corrupt and bad generation of men,—considering what reasons and obligations they have to be better.—Yet still I affirm, if those restraints were lessened,—the world would be infinitely worse; and therefore we cannot sufficiently bless and

adore the goodness of God, for these advantages brought by the coming of Christ—which God grant that we may live to be more deserving of; —that, in the last day, when he shall come again to judge the world, we may rise to life immortal. Amen.

SERMON XXXIV.

TRUST IN GOD.

PSALM XXXVII. 3.

Put thou thy trust in the Lord.

WHOEVER seriously reflects upon the state and condition of man, and looks upon that dark side of it, which represents his life as open to so many causes of trouble;—when he sees how often he eats the bread of affliction, and that he is born to it as naturally as the sparks fly upwards;—that no rank or degrees of men are exempted from this law of our beings;—but that all, from the high cedar of Libanus to the humble shrub upon the wall, are shook in their turns by numberless calamities and distresses;—when one sits down, and looks upon this gloomy side of things, with all the sorrowful changes and chances which surround us, at first sight, would not one wonder how the spirit of a man could bear the infirmities of his nature, and what it is that supports him, as it does, under the many evil accidents which he meets with in his passage through the valley of tears?—Without some certain aid within us to bear us up, so tender a frame as ours would be but ill-fitted to encounter what generally befals it in this rugged journey: and accordingly we find that we are so

curiously wrought by an all-wise hand with a view to this, that, in the very composition and texture of our nature, there is a remedy and provision left against most of the evils we suffer;—we being so ordered, that the principle of self-love, given us for preservation, comes in here to our aid, by opening a door of hope, and, in the worst emergencies, flattering us with a belief that we shall extricate ourselves, and live to see better days.

This expectation, though, in fact, it no way alters the nature of the cross accidents to which we lie open, or does at all pervert the course of them, yet imposes upon the sense of them, and like a secret spring in a well-contrived machine, though it cannot prevent, at least it counterbalances the pressure, and so bears up this tottering, tender frame under many a violent shock and hard jostling, which, otherwise, would unavoidably overwhelm it. Without such an inward resource, from an inclination which is natural to man, to trust and hope for redress in the most deplorable conditions, his state in this life would be, of all creatures, the most miserable.—When his mind was either wrung with affliction, or his body lay tortured with the gout or stone, did he think that, in this world, there should be no respite to his sorrow?—Could he believe the pains he endured would continue equally intense,—without remedy,—without intermission?—With what deplorable lamentation would he languish out his day!—and how sweet, as Job says, would the "clods of the valley be to him?"—But so sad a persuasion, whatever grounds there may

be sometimes for it, scarce ever gets full possession of the mind of man, which, by nature, struggles against despair: so that, whatever part of us suffers, the darkest mind instantly ushers in this relief to it,—points out to hope, encourages to build, though on a sandy foundation, and raises an expectation in us, that things will come to a fortunate issue.—And, indeed, it is something surprising to consider the strange force of this passion;—what wonders it has wrought in supporting men's spirits in all ages, and under such inextricable difficulties, that they have sometimes hoped, as the Apostle expresses it, even against hope,—against all likelihood;—and have looked forwards with comfort under misfortunes, when there has been little or nothing to favor such an expectation.

This flattering propensity in us, which I have here represented, as it is built upon one of the most deceitful of human passions—(that is)—self-love, which at all times inclines us to think better of ourselves and conditions than there is ground for;—how great soever the relief is, which a man draws from it at present, it too often disappoints in the end, leaving him to go on his way sorrowing, —mourning,—as the prophet says, that his hope is lost.—So that, after all, in our severer trials, we still find a necessity of calling in something to aid this principle, and direct it so that it may not wander with this uncertain expectation of what may never be accomplished, but fix itself upon a proper object of trust and reliance, that is able to fulfil our desires, to hear our cry, and to help us.

The passion of hope, without this, though in straits a man may support his spirits for a time with a general expectation of better fortune, yet, like a ship tossed without a pilot upon a troublesome sea, it may float upon the surface for a while, but is never—never likely to be brought to the haven where it would be. To accomplish this, reason and religion are called in at length, and join with nature in exhorting us to hope; but to hope in God, in whose hands are the issues of life and death, and without whose knowledge and permission we know that not a hair of our heads can fall to the ground. Strengthened with this anchor of hope, which keeps us steadfast when the rains descend and the floods come upon us, however the sorrows of a man are multiplied, he bears up his head, looks towards Heaven with confidence, waiting for the salvation of God: he then builds upon a rock, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.—He may be troubled, it is true, on every side, but shall not be distressed—perplexed, yet not in despair:—though he walks through the valley of the shadow of death, even then he fears no evil; this rod and this staff comfort him.

The virtue of this had been sufficiently tried by David, and had, no doubt, been of use to him in the course of a life full of afflictions; many of which were so great, that he declares that he should verily have fainted under the sense and apprehension of them, but that he believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.—He believed!—How could he do otherwise? He had all the

conviction that reason and inspiration could give him, that there was a Being in whom every thing concurred which could be the proper object of trust and confidence,—power to help,—and goodness always to incline him to do it. He knew this infinite Being, though his dwelling was so high, —that his glory was above the heavens, yet humbled himself to behold the things that are done in heaven and earth:—that he was not an idle and distant spectator of what passed there, but that he was a present help in time of trouble:—that he bowed the heavens, and came down to overrule the course of things: delivering the poor and him that was in misery, from him that was too strong for him; lifting the simple out of his distress, and guarding him by his providence, so that no man should do him wrong; that neither the Sun should smite him by day, neither the Moon by night.— Of this, the Psalmist had such evidence from his observation on the life of others, with the strongest conviction, at the same time, which a long life, full of personal deliverances, could give; all which taught him the value of the lesson in the text, from which he had received so much encouragement himself, that he transmits it for the benefit of the whole race of mankind after him, to support them, as it had done him, under the afflictions which befel him.

"Trust in God;" as if he had said, Whosoever thou art that shall hereafter fall into any such straits or troubles as I have experienced, learn by my example where to seek for succour:—trust not

in princes, nor in any child of man, for there is no help in them:—the sons of men, who are of low degree, are vanity, and are not able to help thee:—men of high degree are a lie, too often deceive thy hopes, and will not help thee:—but thou, when thy soul is in heaviness, turn thy eyes from the earth, and look up towards heaven, to that infinitely kind and powerful Being, who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth; who is a present help in time of trouble:—despond not, and say within thyself—why his chariot-wheels stay so long?—and why he vouchsafeth thee not a speedy relief?—but arm thyself in thy misfortunes with patience and fortitude; trust in God, who sees all those conflicts under which thou labourest, who knows thy necessities afar off, and puts all thy tears into his bottle; who sees every careful thought and pensive look, and hears every sigh and melancholy groan thou utterest.

In all thy exigencies, trust and depend on him; nor ever doubt but he, who heareth the cry of the fatherless, and defendeth the cause of the widow, if it is just, will hear thine, and either lighten thy burden, and let thee go free; or, which is the same, if that seems not meet, by adding strength to thy mind, to enable thee to sustain what he has suffered to be laid upon thee.

Whoever recollects the particular psalms said to be composed by this great man, under the several distresses and cross accidents of his life, will perceive the justice of this paraphrase, which is agreeable to the strain of reasoning which runs through,

—which is little else than a recollection of his own words and thoughts upon those occasions, in all which he appears to have been no less signal in his afflictions than in his piety, and in that goodness of soul which he discovers under them.—I said, the reflections upon his own life and providential escapes which he had experienced, had had a share in forming these religious sentiments of trust in his mind, which had so early taken root, that when he was going to fight the Philistine,—when he was but a youth and stood before Saul,—he had already learned to argue in this manner:—Let no man's heart fail him;—thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by the beard, and smote him, and slew him;—thy servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine will be as one of them; for the Lord, who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will also deliver me out of his hand. The conclusion was natural, and the experience which every man has had of God's former loving kindness and protection to him, either in dangers or distress, does unavoidably engage him to think in the same strain. It is observable that the apostle St. Paul encouraging the Corinthians to bear with patience the trials incident to human nature, reminds them of the deliverances that God did formerly vouchsafe to him, and his fellow-labourers, Gaius and Aristarchus;

and on that ground, builds a rock of encouragement for future trust and dependance on him. His life had been in very great jeopardy at Ephesus, where he had like to have been brought out to the theatre to be devoured by wild beasts, and, indeed, had no human means to avert, and consequently to escape it; and therefore he tells them, that he had this advantage by it, that the more he believed he should be put to death, the more he was engaged by his deliverance, never to depend on any worldly trust, but only on God, who can rescue from the greatest extremity, even from the grave and death itself.—For we would not, brethren, says he, have you ignorant of our trouble, which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above our strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:—but we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, and in whom we trust that he will still deliver us.

And, indeed, a stronger argument cannot be brought for future trust, than the remembrance of past protection;—for what ground or reason can I have to distrust the kindness of that person who has always been my friend and benefactor?

On whom can I better rely for assistance in the day of my distress, than on him who stood by me in all mine affliction?—and, when I was at the brink of destruction, delivered me out of all my troubles? Would it not be highly ungrateful, and

reflect either upon his goodness or his sufficiency, to distrust that providence which has always had a watchful eye over me? and who, according to his gracious promises, will never leave me, nor forsake me, and who, in all my wants, in all my emergencies, has been abundantly more willing to give, than I to ask it? If the former and the latter rain have hitherto descended upon the earth in due season, and seed-time and harvest have never yet failed; why should I fear famine in the land, or doubt, but that he who feedeth the raven, and providently catereth for the sparrow, should likewise be my comfort? How unlikely is it that ever he should suffer his truth to fail? This train of reflection, from the consideration of past mercies, is suitable and natural to all mankind:—there being no one, who by calling to mind God's kindnesses, which have been ever of old, but will see cause to apply the argument to himself.

And though, in looking back upon the events which have befallen us, we are apt to attribute too much to the arm of flesh, in recounting the more successful parts of them; saying,—My wisdom, my parts, and address, extricated me from this misfortune;—my foresight and penetration saved me from a second;—my courage, and the mightiness of my strength, carried me through a third.—However we are accustomed to talk in this manner,—yet whoever coolly sits down and reflects upon the many accidents (though very improperly called so) which have befallen him in the course of his life,—when he considers the many

amazing turns in his favor,—sometimes in the most unpromising cases,—and often brought about by the most unlikely causes;—when he remembers the particular providences which have gone along with him,—the many personal deliverances which have preserved him,—the unaccountable manner in which he has been enabled to get through difficulties, which on all sides beset him, at one time of his life, or the strength of mind he found himself endowed with, to encounter afflictions which fell upon him at another period: where is the man, I say, who looks back with the least religious sense, upon what has thus happened to him, who could not give you sufficient proofs of God's power, and his arm over him, and recount several cases wherein the God of Jacob was his help, and the Holy One of Israel his redeemer?

Hast thou ever laid upon the bed of languishing, or laboured under a grievous distemper which threatened thy life? Call to mind thy sorrowful and pensive spirit at that time; and to add to it, who it was that had mercy on thee, that brought thee out of darkness and the shadow of death, and made all thy bed in thy sickness.——

Hath the scantiness of thy condition hurried thee into great straits and difficulties, and brought thee almost to distraction?—Consider who it was that spread thy table in that wilderness of thought,—who was it made thy cup to overflow,—who added a friend of consolation to thee, and thereby spake peace to thy troubled mind.—Hast thou ever sustained any considerable damage in thy

stock or trade?—Bethink thyself who it was that gave thee a serene and contented mind under those losses.—If thou hast recovered,—consider who it was that repaired those breaches,—when thy own skill and endeavours failed:—call to mind whose providence has blessed them since,—whose hand it was that has since set a hedge about thee, and made all that thou hast done to prosper.—Hast thou ever been wounded in thy more tender part, through the loss of an obliging husband?—or hast thou been torn away from the embraces of a dear and promising child, by his unexpected death?—

O consider, whether the God of truth did not approve himself a father to thee when fatherless,—or a husband to thee, when a widow,—and has either given thee a name better than of sons and daughters, or even beyond thy hope, made thy remaining tender branches to grow up tall and beautiful, like the cedars of Libanus.

Strengthened by these considerations, suggesting the same or like past deliverances, either to thyself,—thy friends or acquaintance,—thou wilt learn this great lesson in the text, in all thy exigencies and distresses,—to trust God; and whatever befals thee in the many changes and chances of this mortal life, to speak comfort to thy soul, and to say in the words of Habakkuk the prophet, with which I conclude,——

Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines;—although the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no

meat;—although the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet we will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of our salvation.

To whom be all honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

SERMON XXXV.

EXODUS, XXI. 14.

But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from my altar, that he may die.

As the end and happy result of society was our mutual protection from the depredations which malice and avarice lay us open to,—so have the laws of God laid proportionable restraints against such violations as would defeat us of such a security.—Of all other attacks which can be made against us,—that of a man's life which is his all,—being the greatest,—the offence, in God's dispensation to the Jews, was denounced as the most heinous,—and represented as most unpardonable. —At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.—Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed:—Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer;—he shall surely be put to death.—So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are,—for blood defileth the land;—and the land cannot be cleansed of blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.—For this reason, by the laws of all civilized nations, in all parts of the globe, it has been punished with death.—

Some civilized and wise communities have so

far incorporated these severe dispensations into their municipal laws, as to allow of no distinction betwixt murder and homicide,—at least in the penalty:—leaving the intentions of the several parties concerned in it to that Being who knows the heart, and will adjust the differences of the case hereafter.—This falls, no doubt, heavy upon particulars—but it is urged for the benefit of the whole.—It is not the business of a preacher to enter into an examination of the grounds and reasons for so seeming a severity.—Where most severe,—they have proceeded, no doubt, from an excess of abhorrence of a crime,—which is, of all others, most terrible and shocking in its own nature,—and the most direct attack and stroke at society;—as the security of a man's life was the first protection of society,—the ground-work of all the other blessings to be desired from such a compact.—Thefts,—oppressions,—exactions, and violences of that kind, cut off the branches;—this smote the root:—all perished with it—the injury irreparable.—No after-act could make amends for it:—What recompence can he give to a man in exchange for his life?—What satisfaction to the widow,—the fatherless—to the family,—the friends,—the relations,—cut off from his protection,—and rendered perhaps destitute,—perhaps miserable for ever!——

No wonder that, by the law of nature,—this crime was always pursued with the most extreme vengeance;—which made the barbarians to judge,

when they saw St. Paul upon the point of dying a sudden and terrifying death,—No doubt this man is a murderer; who, though he has escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.——

The censure there was rash and uncharitable; but the honest detestation of the crime was uppermost.—They saw a dreadful punishment,—they thought:—and in seeing the one, they suspected the other.—And the vengeance which had overtaken the holy man, was meant by them, the vengeance and punishment of the Almighty Being, whose providence and honor were concerned in pursuing him, from the place he had fled from, to that island.

The honor and authority of God is most evidently struck at, most certainly, in every such crime;—and therefore he would pursue it;—it being the reason, in the ninth of Genesis, upon which the prohibition of murder is grounded;—for in the image of God created he man;—as if to attempt the life of a man had something in it peculiarly daring and audacious;—not only shocking as to its consequence above all other crimes, but of personal violence and indignity against God, the author of our life and death.—That it is the highest act of injustice to man, and which will admit of no compensation,—I have said.—But the depriving a man of life, does not comprehend the whole of his suffering; he may be cut off in an unprovided or disordered condition, with regard to the great account betwixt himself and his Maker.—He may be under the power of irregular passions

and desires.—The best of men are not always upon their guard.—And I am sure we have all reason to join in that affecting part of our Litany,—That amongst other evils,—God would deliver us from sudden death;—that we may have some foresight of that period to compose our spirits,—prepare our accounts,—and put ourselves in the best posture we can to meet it;—for, after we are most prepared,—it is a terror to human nature.—

The people of some nations are said to have a peculiar art in poisoning by slow and gradual advances.—In this case, however horrid,—it savours of mercy with regard to our spiritual state;—for the sensible decays of nature which a sufferer must feel within him from the secret workings of the horrid drug—give warning, and shew that mercy which the bloody hand that comes upon his neighbour suddenly, and slays him with guile,—has denied him.—It may serve to admonish him of the duty of repentance, and to make his peace with God, whilst he had time and opportunity.—The speedy execution of justice, which, as our laws now stand, and which were intended for that end, must strike the greater terror upon that account. —Short as the interval between sentence and death is,—it is long, compared to the case of the murdered.—Thou allowedst the man no time,—said the judge to a late criminal, in a most affecting manner; thou allowedst him not a moment to prepare for eternity;—and to one who thinks at all,—it is, of all reflections and self-accusation, the most heavy and insurmountable,—That by the

hand of violence, a man in a perfect state of health, —whilst he walks out in perfect security, as he thinks, with his friends;—perhaps whilst he is sleeping soundly,—to be hurried out of the world by the assassin,—by a sudden stroke,—to find himself at the bar of God's justice, without notice and preparation for his trial,—'tis most horrible!

Though he be really a good man, (and it is to be hoped God makes merciful allowances in such cases,)—yet it is a terrifying consideration at the best;—and, as the injury is greater,—there are also very aggravating circumstances relating to the person who commits this act.—As when it is the effect, not of a rash and sudden passion, which sometimes disorders and confounds reason for a moment;—but of a deliberate and propense design or malice.—When the sun not only goes down, but rises upon his wrath;—when he sleeps not—till he has struck the stroke;—when, after he has had time and leisure to recollect himself,—and consider what he is going to do;—when, after all the checks of conscience,—the struggles of humanity, —the recoilings of his own blood, at the thoughts of shedding another man's—he shall persist still, —and resolve to do it.—Merciful God! protect us—from doing or suffering such evils.—Blessed be thy name and providence, which seldom or ever suffers it to escape with impunity.—In vain does the guilty flatter himself with hopes of secresy or impunity: the eye of God is always

upon him.—Whither can he fly from his presence? —By the immensity of his nature, he is present in all places:—by the infinity of it, to all times;—by his omniscience, to all thoughts, words, and actions of men.—By an emphatical phrase in Scripture, the blood of the innocent is said to cry to heaven from the ground for vengeance;—and it was for this reason, that he might be brought to justice, that he was debarred the benefit of any asylum and the cities of refuge.—For the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, —and their eye should not pity him.

The text says,—Thou shalt take him from my altar that he may die.—It had been a very ancient imagination, that for men guilty of this and other horrid crimes,—a place held sacred, as dedicated to God, was a refuge and protection to them from the hands of justice.—The law of God cuts the transgressor off from all delusive hopes of this kind;—and I think the Romish church has very little to boast of in the sanctuaries which she leaves open for this and other crimes and irregularities—Sanctuaries which are often the first temptations to wickedness, and therefore bring the greater scandal and dishonour to her that authorises their pretensions.—

Every obstruction of the course of justice,—is a door opened to betray society, and bereave us of those blessings which it has in view.—To stand up for the privileges of such places, is to invite men

to sin with a bribe of impunity.—It is a strange way of doing honor to God, to screen actions which are a disgrace to humanity.—

What Scripture and all civilized nations teach concerning the crime of taking away another man's life,—is applicable to the wickedness of a man's attempting to bereave himself of his own.—He has no more right over it,—than over that of others: —and whatever false glosses have been put upon it by men of bad heads or bad hearts,—it is at the bottom a complication of cowardice, and wickedness, and weakness;—is one of the fatalest mistakes desperation can hurry a man into;—inconsistent with all the reasoning and religion of the world, and irreconcilable with that patience under afflictions,—that resignation and submission to the will of God in all straits which is required of us. —But if our calamities are brought upon ourselves by a man's own wickedness,—still has he less to urge,—least reason has he to renounce the protection of God—when he most stands in need of it, and of his mercy.—

But as I intend the subject of self-murder for my discourse next Sunday,—I shall not anticipate what I have to say, but proceed to consider some other cases, in which the law relating to the life of our neighbour is transgressed in different degrees. —All which are generally spoken of under the subject of murder,—and considered by the best casuists as a species of the same,—and in justice to the subject cannot be passed here.—

St. John says, Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer;—it is the first step to this sin;—and our Saviour in his sermon upon the mount, has explained in how many slighter and unsuspected ways and degrees,—the command in the law,—Thou shalt do no murder, may be opposed, if not broken.—All real mischiefs and injuries maliciously brought upon a man, to the sorrow and disturbance of his mind,—eating out the comfort of his life, and shortening his days, are this sin in disguise;—and the grounds of the Scripture expressing it with such severity is,—that the beginnings of wrath and malice,—in event, often extend to such great and unforeseen effects, as were we foretold them,—we should give so little credit to, as to say,—Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?—And though these beginnings do not necessarily produce the worst, (God forbid they should!) yet they cannot be committed without these evil seeds are first sown:—As Cain's causeless anger, (as Dr. Clarke observes) against his brother,—to which the apostle alludes—ended in taking away his life;—and the best instructors teach us, that, to avoid a sin, we must avoid the steps and temptations which lead to it.——

This should warn us to free our minds from all tincture of avarice, and desire after what is another man's.—It operates the same way,—and has terminated too oft in the same crime.—And it is the great excellency of the Christian religion,—that it has an eye to this in the stress laid upon the first

springs of evil in the heart;—rendering us accountable not only for our words,—but the thoughts themselves,—if not checked in time, but suffered to proceed further than the first motions of concupiscence.

Ye have heard, therefore, says our Saviour, that it was said by them of old time,—Thou shalt not kill;—but I say unto you,—whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment;—and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca,—shall be in danger of the council;—but whosoever shall say, "thou fool,"—shall be in danger of hell-fire.—The interpretation of which I shall give you in the words of a great scripturist, Dr. Clarke,—and is as follows:—That the three gradations of crimes are an allusion to the three different degrees of punishment, in the three courts of judicature amongst the Jews.—And our Saviour's meaning was,—that every degree of sin, from its first conception to its outrage,—every degree of malice and hatred, shall receive from God a punishment proportionable to the offence. Whereas the old law, according to the Jewish interpretation, extended not to these things at all,—forbade only murder and outward injuries.—Whosoever shall say, "thou fool," shall be in danger of hell-fire.—The sense of which is not that, in the strict and literal acceptation, every rash and passionate expression shall be punished with eternal damnation;—(for who then would be saved?)—but that at the exact account at the judgment of the great day, every secret thought and intent of

the heart shall have its just estimation and weight in the degrees of punishment, which shall be assigned to every one in his final state.

There is another species of this crime which is seldom taken notice of in discourses upon the subject,—and yet can be reduced to no other class:—And that is, where the life of our neighbour is shortened,—and often taken away as directly as by a weapon, by the empirical sale of nostrums and quack medicines,—which ignorance and avarice blend.—The loud tongue of ignorance impudently promises much,—and the ear of the sick is open.—And as many of these pretenders deal in edge tools; too many, I fear, perish with the misapplication of them.——

So great are the difficulties of tracing out the hidden causes of the evils to which this frame of ours is subject,—that the most candid of the profession have ever allowed and lamented how unavoidably they are in the dark.—So that the best medicines, administered with the wisest heads,—shall often do the mischief they were intended to prevent.—These are misfortunes to which we are subject in this state of darkness;—but when men without skill,—without education,—without knowledge either of the distemper, or even of what they sell,—make merchandize of the miserable,—and, from a dishonest principle,—trifle with the pains of the unfortunate,—too often with their lives,—and from the mere motive of a dishonest gain,—every such instance of a person bereft of life by the hand of ignorance, can be considered in no

other light than a branch of the same root.—It is murder in the true sense;—which, though not cognizable by our laws,—by the laws of right, every man's own mind and conscience must appear equally black and detestable.——

In doing what is wrong,—we stand chargeable with all the bad consequences which arise from the action, whether foreseen or not.—And as the principal view of the empyric in those cases is not what he always pretends,—the good of the public,—but the good of himself,—it makes the action what it is.——Under this head, it may not be improper to comprehend all adulterations of medicines, wilfully made worse through avarice.—If a life is lost by such wilful adulterations,—and it may be affirmed, that, in many critical turns of an acute distemper, there is but a single cast left for the patient,—the trial and chance of a single drug in his behalf; and if that has wilfully been adulterated and wilfully despoiled of its best virtues,—what will the vender answer?——

May God grant we may all answer well for ourselves, that we may be finally happy. Amen.

SERMON XXXVI.

SANCTITY OF THE APOSTLES.

MATTHEW, XI. 6.

Blessed is he, that shall not be offended in me.

THE general prejudices of the Jewish nation concerning the royal state and condition of the Saviour, who was to come into the world, was a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, to the greatest part of that unhappy and prepossessed people, when the promise was actually fulfilled. Whether it was altogether the traditions of their fathers, or that the rapturous expressions of their prophets, which represented the Messiah's spiritual kingdom in such extent of power and dominion, misled them into it; or that their own carnal expectations turned wilful interpreters upon them, inclining them too look for nothing but the wealth and worldly grandeur which were to be acquired under their deliverer:—whether these, or that the system of temporal blessings helped to cherish them in this gross and covetous expectation, it was one of the great causes for their rejecting him. "This fellow, "we know not from whence he is," was the popular cry of one part:—and they who seemed to know whence he was, scornfully turned it against him by the repeated quere,—Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and

Joses, and of Juda and Simon?—and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. So that, though it was prepared by God to be the glory of his people Israel, yet the circumstances of humility, in which he was manifested, were thought a scandal to them. Strange!—that he who was born their king, should be born of no other virgin than Mary, the meanest of their people; (for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden), and of one of the poorest too: for she had not a lamb to offer, but was purified, as Moses directed in such a case, by the oblation of a turtle-dove; that the Saviour of their nation, whom they expected to be ushered amidst them with all the ensigns and apparatus of royalty, should be brought forth in a stable, and answerable to distress; subjected all his life to the lowest conditions of humanity:—that whilst he lived, he should not have a hole to put his head in, nor his corpse in, when he died; but his grave too must be the gift of charity. These were thwarting considerations to those who waited for the redemption of Israel, and looked for it in no other shape, than the accomplishment of those golden dreams of temporal power and sovereignty, which had filled their imaginations. The ideas were not to be reconciled; and so insuperable an obstacle was the prejudice on one side, to their belief on the other, that it literally fell out, as Simeon prophetically declared of the Messiah, that he was set forth for the *fall*, as well as the rising again, of many in Israel.

This, though it was the cause of their infidelity, was however no excuse for it. For whatever their mistakes were, the miracles which were wrought in contradiction to them, brought conviction enough to leave them without excuse; and besides it was natural for them to have concluded, had their prepossessions given them leave,—that he who fed five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, could not want power to be great; and therefore needed not to appear in the condition of poverty and meanness, had it not, on other scores, been more needful to confront the pride and vanity of the world, and to shew his followers what the temper of christianity was, by the temper of its first institutor; who, though they were offered, and he could have commanded them, despised the glories of the world:—took upon him the form of a servant; and though equal with God, yet made himself of no reputation, that he might settle, and be the example of, so holy and humble a religion, and thereby convince his disciples for ever, that neither his kingdom, nor their happiness, were to be of this world. Thus the Jews might have easily argued; but when there was nothing but reason to do it with on one side, and strong prejudices, backed with interest, to maintain the dispute, upon the other,—we do not find the point is always so easily determined. Although the purity of our Saviour's doctrine, and the mighty works he wrought in its support, were demonstratively stronger arguments for his divinity, than the unrespected lowliness of his condition could be

against it;—yet the prejudice continued strong;—they had been accustomed to temporal promises;—so bribed to do their duty, they could not endure to think of a religion that would not promise, as much as Moses did, to fill their basket, and set them high above all nations:—a religion whose appearance was not great and splendid,—but looked thin and meagre;—and whose principles and promises,—like the curses of their law, called for sufferings, and promised persecutions!

If we take this key along with us through the New Testament, it will let us into the spirit and meaning of many of our Saviour's replies in his conferences with his disciples and others of the Jews;—so particularly in this place, Matthew, vi. when John had sent two of his disciples to enquire, Whether it was he that should come, or that they were to look for another? Our Saviour, with a particular eye to this prejudice, and the general scandal he knew had risen against his religion upon this worldly account, after a recital to the messengers of the many miracles he had wrought; as that—the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, the dead raised;—all which characters, with their benevolent ends, fully demonstrated him to be the Messiah that was promised them;—he closes up his answer to them with the words of the text,—and blessed is he that shall not be offended in me;—Blessed is the man whose upright and honest heart will not be blinded by worldly considerations, or hearken to his lusts and prepossessions in a truth of this moment. The like

benediction is recorded in the seventh chapter of St. Luke, and in the sixth of St. John;—when Peter broke out in that warm confession of their belief,—Lord, we believe, we are sure that thou art Christ, the son of the living God. The same benediction is uttered, though couched in different words,—Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood has not revealed it, but my Father which is in heaven. Flesh and blood, the natural workings of this carnal desire, the lust and love of the world, have had no hand in this conviction of thine; but my Father, and the works which I have wrought in his name, in vindication of this faith, have established thee in it, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.

This universal ruling principle, and almost invincible attachment to the interests and glories of the world, which we see first made so powerful a stand against the belief of christianity, has continued to have as ill an effect, at least, upon the practice of it ever since; and therefore there is no one point of wisdom, that is of a nearer importance to us, than to purify this gross appetite, and restrain it within bounds, by lowering our high conceit of the things of this life, and our concern for those advantages which misled the Jews. To judge justly of the world, we must stand at a due distance from it, which will discover to us the vanity of its riches and honors in such true dimensions, as will engage us to behave ourselves towards them with moderation. This is all that is wanting to make us wise and good; that we may be left to

the full influence of religion, to which christianity so far conduces, that it is the great blessing, the peculiar advantage, we enjoy under its institution, that it affords us not only the most excellent precepts of this kind, but also it shews us those precepts confirmed by most excellent examples. A heathen philosopher may talk very elegantly about despising the world, and, like Seneca, may prescribe very ingenious rules to teach us an art he never exercised himself: for all the while he was writing in praise of poverty, he was enjoying a great estate, and endeavouring to make it greater. But if ever we hope to reduce those rules to practice, it must be by the help of religion.—If we would find men who, by their lives, bore witness to their doctrines, we must look for them amongst the acts and monuments of our church, amongst the first followers of their crucified Master; who spoke with authority, because they spoke experimentally, and took care to make their words good, by despising the world, and voluntarily accounting all things in it loss, that they might win Christ. —O holy and blessed apostles! blessed were ye indeed,—for ye conferred not with flesh and blood, —for ye were not offended in him through any considerations of this world; ye conferred not with flesh and blood, neither with its snares and temptations.—Neither the pleasures of life or the pains of death laid hold upon your faith, to make you fall from him.—Ye had your prejudices of worldly grandeur in common with the rest of your nation; saw, like them, your expectations blasted; but ye

gave them up, as men governed by reason and truth.—As ye surrendered all your hopes in this world to your faith with fortitude, so did ye meet the terrors of the world with the same temper.—Neither the frowns and discountenance of the civil powers, neither tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or cold, or nakedness, or famine, or the sword, could separate from you the love of Christ.—Ye took up your crosses cheerfully, and followed him; followed the same rugged way—trod the wine-press after him; voluntarily submitting yourselves to poverty, to punishment, to the scorn and the reproaches of the world, which ye knew were to be the portion of all of you who engaged in preaching a mystery so spoken against by the world, so unpalatable to all its passions and pleasures, and so irreconcilable to the pride of human reason.—So that ye were, as one of ye expressed, and all of ye experimentally found, though ye were made as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things, upon this account; yet ye went on as zealously as ye set out.—Ye were not offended nor ashamed of the gospel of Christ;—wherefore should ye?—The impostor and hypocrite might have been ashamed;—the guilty would have found cause for it;—ye had no cause, though ye had temptation.—Ye preached *but what ye knew*, and your honest and upright hearts gave evidence,—the strongest,—to the truth of it; for ye left all, ye suffered all, ye gave all, that your sincerity had left you to give. Ye gave your lives, at last, as pledges and confirmations of your faith and warmest

affection for your Lord. Holy and blessed men! ye gave all, when, alas! our cold and frozen affection will part with nothing for his sake, not even with our vices and follies, which are worse than nothing; for they are vanity, and misery, and death.——

The state of christianity calls not now for such evidences, as the apostles gave of their attachment to it. We have, literally speaking, neither houses, nor lands, nor possessions, to forsake;—we have neither wives or children, or brethren, or sisters, to be torn from;—no rational pleasure or natural endearments to give up.—We have nothing to part with, but what is not our interest to keep—our lusts and passions.—We have nothing to do for Christ's sake, but what is most for our own; that is, to be temperate, and chaste, and just, and peaceable, and charitable, and kind, to one another.—So that, if man could suppose himself in a capacity even of capitulating with God, concerning the terms upon which he would submit to his government, and to choose the laws he would be bound to observe in testimony of his faith, it were impossible for him to make any proposals which, upon all accounts, should be more advantageous to his interests, than those very conditions to which we are already obliged; that is, to deny ourselves ungodliness, to live soberly and righteously in this present life, and lay such restraints upon our appetites as for the honor of human nature, the improvement of our happiness, our health, our peace, our reputation, and safety. When one considers

this representation of the temporal inducements of christianity, and compares it with the difficulties and discouragements which they encountered who first made profession of a persecuted and hated religion; at the same time that it raises the idea of the fortitude and sanctity of these holy men, of whom the world is not worthy, it sadly diminishes that of ourselves, which, though it has all the blessings of this life apparently on its side to support it, yet can scarce be kept alive;—and if we may form a judgment from the little stock of religion which is left, should God ever exact the same trials, unless we greatly alter for the better, or there should prove some secret charm in persecution, which we know not of.—It is much to be doubted, if the Son of man should make this proof, of this generation, whether there would be found faith upon the earth.

As this argument may convince us, so let it shame us unto virtue, that the admirable examples of those holy men may not be left us, or commemorated by us, to no end;—but rather that they may answer the pious purpose of their institution, —to conform our lives to theirs,—that, with them, we may be partakers of a glorious inheritance, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SERMON XXXVII.

PENANCES.

1 JOHN, v. 3.

And his commandments are not grievous.

No, they are not grievous, my dear auditors.—Amongst the many prejudices which, at one time or other, have been conceived against our holy religion, there is scarce any one which has done more dishonor to christianity, or which has been more opposite to the spirit of the gospel, than this, in express contradiction to the words of the text, "That the commandments of God *are* grievous,"—that the way which leads to life is not only straight, for that our Saviour tells us, and that with much tribulation we shall seek it;—but that christians are bound to make the worst of it, and tread it barefoot upon thorns and briers, if ever they expect to arrive happily at their journey's end.—And, in course, during this disastrous pilgrimage, it is our duty so to renounce the world, and abstract ourselves from it, as neither to interfere with its interests, or taste any of the pleasures or any of the enjoyments of this life.——

Nor has this been confined merely to speculation, but has frequently been extended to practice, as is plain, not only from the lives of many legendary saints and hermits, whose chief commendation

seems to have been, "That they fled unnaturally "from all commerce with their fellow-creatures, "and then mortified, and piously half-starved them- "selves to death;"—but likewise from the many austere and fantastic orders which we see in the Romish church, which have all owed their origin and establishment to the same idle and extravagant opinion.

Nor is it to be doubted, but the affectation of something like it in our Methodists, when they descant upon the necessity of alienating themselves from the world, and selling all that they have, is not to be ascribed to the same mistaken enthusiastic principle, which would cast so black a shade upon religion, as if the kind Author of it had created us on purpose to go mourning all our lives long, in sackcloth and ashes, and sent us into the world as so many saint-errants, in quest of adventures full of sorrow and affliction.

Strange force of enthusiasm!—and yet not altogether unaccountable. For what opinion was there ever so odd, or action so extravagant, which has not, at one time or other, been produced by ignorance,—conceit,—melancholy?—a mixture of devotion, with an ill concurrence of air and diet, operating together in the same person. —When the minds of men happen to be thus unfortunately prepared, whatever groundless doctrine rises up, and settles itself strongly upon their fancies, has generally the ill-luck to be interpreted as an illumination from the spirit of God;—and whatever strange action they find in themselves a strong inclination

to do, that impulse is concluded to be a call from heaven; and, consequently, that they cannot err in executing it.

If this, or some such account, was not to be admitted, how is it possible to be conceived, that christianity, which breathed out nothing but peace and comfort to mankind, which professedly took off the severities of the Jewish law, and was given us in the spirit of meekness, to ease our shoulders of a burden which was too heavy for us:—that this religion, so kindly calculated for the ease and tranquillity of man, which enjoins nothing but what is suitable to his nature, should be so misunderstood; or that it should ever be supposed, that he who is infinitely happy, could envy us our enjoyments; or that a Being, infinitely kind, would grudge a mournful passenger a little rest and refreshment, to support his spirits through a weary pilgrimage; or that he should call him to an account hereafter, because, in his way, he had hastily snatched at some fugacious and innocent pleasures, till he was suffered to take up his final repose.—This is no improbable account, and the many invitations we find in Scripture to a grateful enjoyment of the blessings and advantages of life, make it evident.—The Apostle tells us in the text, That God's commandments are not grievous.—He has pleasure in the prosperity of his people, and wills not that they should turn tyrants and executioners upon their minds or bodies, and inflict pains and penalties on them to no end or purpose:—that he has proposed peace and plenty, joy and victory, as the

encouragement and portion of his servants; thereby instructing us, that our virtue is not necessarily endangered by the fruition of outward things; but that temporal blessings and advantages, instead of extinguishing, more naturally kindle our love and gratitude to God, before whom it is no way inconsistent both to worship and rejoice.

If this was not so, why, you'll say, does God seem to have made such provision for our happiness?—Why has he given us so many powers and faculties for enjoyment, and adapted so many objects to gratify and entertain them?—Some of which he has created so fair, with such wonderful beauty, and has formed them so exquisitely for this end, that they have power, for a time, to charm away the sense of pain, to cheer up the dejected heart under poverty and sickness, and make it go and remember its miseries no more. Can all this, you'll say, be reconciled to God's wisdom, which does nothing in vain; or can it be accounted for on any other supposition, but that the Author of our being, who has given us all things richly to enjoy, wills us a comfortable existence even *here*, and seems moreover so evidently to have ordered things with a view to this, that the ways which lead to our future happiness, when rightly understood, he has made to be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace?

From this representation of things, we are led to this demonstrative truth, then, that God never intended to debar man of pleasures under certain limitations.

Travellers, on a business of the last and most important concern, may be allowed to please their eyes with the natural and artificial beauties of the country they are passing through, without reproach of forgetting the main errand they were sent upon; —and if they are not led out of their road by a variety of prospects, edifices, and ruins, would it not be a senseless piece of severity to shut their eyes against such gratifications? "For who has required such service at their hands?"

The humouring of certain appetites, where morality is not concerned, seems to be the means by which the Author of nature intended to sweeten this journey of life, and bear us up under the many shocks and hard jostlings which we are sure to meet with in our way.—And a man might, with as much reason, muffle up himself against sunshine and fair weather, and at other times expose himself naked to the inclemencies of cold and rain, as debar himself of the innocent delights of his nature, for affected reserve and melancholy.

It is true, on the other hand, our passions are apt to grow upon us by indulgence, and become exorbitant, if they are not kept under exact discipline; that, by way of caution and prevention, 'twere better, at certain times, to affect some degree of needless reserve, than hazard any ill consequences from the other extreme.

But when almost the whole of religion is made to consist in the pious fooleries of penances and sufferings, as is practised in the church of Rome (did no other evil attend it), yet, since it is putting

religion upon a wrong scent, placing it more in these than in inward purity and integrity of heart, one cannot guard too much against this, as well as all other such abuses of religion, as make it to consist in something which it ought not. How such mockery became a part of religion at first, or upon what motives they were imagined to be services acceptable to God, is hard to give a better account of than what was hinted above;—namely, that men of melancholy and morose tempers, conceiving the Deity to be like themselves, a gloomy, discontented, and sorrowful being, believed he delighted, as they did, in splenetic and mortifying actions, and therefore made their religious worship to consist of chimeras as wild and barbarous as their own dreams and vapours.

What ignorance and enthusiasm at first introduced—now tyranny and imposture continue to support. So that the political improvement of these delusions to the purposes of wealth and power, is made one of the strongest pillars which upholds the Romish religion; which, with all its pretences to a more strict mortification and sanctity, when you examine it minutely, is little else than a mere pecuniary contrivance. And the truest definition you can give of popery—is,—that it is a system put together and contrived to operate upon men's weaknesses and passions—and thereby to pick their pockets, and leave them in a fit condition for its arbitrary designs.

And, indeed, that church has not been wanting in gratitude for the good offices of this kind, which

the doctrine of penances has done them; for, in consideration of its services, they have raised it above the level of moral duties, and have at length complimented it into the number of their sacraments, and made it a necessary point of salvation.

By these and other tenets, no less politic and inquisitional,—popery has found out the art of making men miserable in spite of their senses, and the plenty with which God has blessed them.

So that in many countries where popery reigns, —but especially in that part of Italy where she has raised her throne,—though, by the happiness of its soil and climate, it is capable of producing as great variety and abundance as any country upon earth;—yet so successful have its spiritual directors been in the management and retail of these blessings, that they have found means to allay, if not entirely to defeat, them all, by one pretence or other. Some bitterness is officiously squeezed into every man's cup for his soul's health, till, at length, the whole intention of nature and providence is destroyed. It is not surprising that where such unnatural severities are practised and heightened by other hardships, the most fruitful land should be barren, and wear a face of poverty and desolation; or that many thousands, as have been observed, should fly from the rigours of such a government, and seek shelter rather amongst rocks and deserts, than lie at the mercy of so many unreasonable task-makers, under whom they can hope for no other reward of their industry, but rigorous slavery,

made still worse by the tortures of unnecessary mortifications.—*I say unnecessary*, because where there *is* a virtuous and good end proposed from any sober instance of self-denial and mortification,—God forbid we should call them unnecessary, or that we should dispute against a thing—from the abuse to which it has been put;—and, therefore, what is said in general upon this head, will be understood to reach no farther than where the practice is become a mixture of fraud and tyranny, but will no ways be interpreted to extend to those self-denials which the discipline of our holy church directs at this solemn season; which have been introduced by reason and good sense at first, and have since been applied to serve no purposes, but those of religion. These by restraining our appetites for a while, and withdrawing our thoughts from grosser objects, do, by a mechanical effect, dispose us for cool and sober reflections, incline us to turn our eyes inwards upon ourselves, and consider what we are, and what we have been doing; —for what intent we were sent into the world, and what kind of characters we were designed to act in it.

It is necessary that the mind of man, at some certain periods, should be prepared to enter into this account; and without some such discipline, to check the insolence of unrestrained appetites, and call home the conscience,—the soul of man, capable as it is of brightness and perfection, would sink down to the lowest depths of darkness and brutality. However true this is, there still appears

no obligation to renounce the innocent delights of our beings, or to affect a sullen distaste against them. Nor, in truth, can even the supposition of it be well admitted:—for pleasures arising from the free and natural exercise of the faculties of the mind and body, to talk them down, is like talking against the frame and mechanism of human nature, and would be no less senseless than the disputing against the burning of fire, or falling downwards of a stone. Besides this, man is so contrived, that he stands in need of frequent repairs;—both mind and body are apt to sink and grow unactive under long and close attention; and, therefore, must be restored by proper recruits. Some part of our time may doubtless innocently and lawfully be employed in actions merely diverting; and whenever such indulgencies become criminal, it is seldom the nature of the actions themselves, but the excess which makes them so.

But some one may here ask,—By what rule are we to judge of excess in these cases? If the enjoyment of the same sort of pleasures may be either innocent or guilty, according to the use and abuse of them,—how shall we be certified where the boundaries lie?—or be speculative enough to know how far we may go with safety?—I answer, there are very few who are not casuists enough to make a right judgment in this point. For since one principal reason, why God may be supposed to allow pleasure in this world, seems to be for the refreshment and recruit of our souls and bodies,

which like clocks must be wound up at certain intervals, every man understands so much of the frame and mechanism of himself, to know how and when to unbend himself with such relaxations as are necessary to regain his natural vigour and cheerfulness, without which it is impossible he should either be in a disposition or capacity to discharge these several duties of his life. Here then the partition becomes visible.

Whenever we pay this tribute to our appetites, any further than is sufficient for the purposes for which it was first granted, the action proportionably loses some share of its innocence. The surplusage of what is unnecessarily spent on such occasions, is so much of the little portion of our time negligently squandered, which, in prudence, we should apply better; because it was allotted us for more important uses, and a different account will be required of it at our hands hereafter.

For this reason, does it not evidently follow,—that many actions and pursuits, which are irreproachable in their own natures, may be rendered blameable and vicious, from this single consideration, "That they have made us wasteful of the moments of this short and uncertain fragment of life, which should be almost one of our last prodigalities, since of them all the least retrieveable." Yet how often is deversion, instead of amusement and relaxation, made the art and business of life itself? Look round,—what policy and contrivance is every day put in practice, for pre-engaging every day in the week, and parcelling out every

hour of the day for one idleness or another,—for doing nothing, or something worse than nothing; and that with so much ingenuity, as scarce to leave a minute upon their hands to reproach them.—Though we all complain of the shortness of life,—yet how many people seem quite overstocked with the days and hours of it, and are continually sending out into the highways and streets of the city for guests to come and take it off their hands. If some of the more distressful objects of this kind were to sit down and write a bill of their time, though partial as that of the unjust steward, when they found in reality, that the whole sum of it, for many years, amounted to little more than this,—that they had rose up to eat,—to drink,—to play,—and had laid down again, merely because they were fit for nothing else:—when they looked back and beheld this fair space, capable of such heavenly improvements,—all scrawled over and defaced with a succession of so many unmeaning cyphers,—good God!—how would they be ashamed and confounded at the account.

With what reflections will they be able to support themselves in the decline of a life so miserably cast away,—should it happen, as it sometimes does,—that they have stood idle even unto the eleventh hour?—We have not always power, and are not always in a temper, to impose upon ourselves.—When the edge of appetite is worn down, and the spirits of youthful days are cooled, which hurried us on in a circle of pleasure and impertinence,—then reason and reflection will have the weight

which they deserve;—afflictions, or the bed of sickness, will supply the place of conscience;—and if they should fail,—old age will overtake us at last,—and shew us the past pursuits of life—and force us to look upon them in their true point of view. If there is any thing more to cast a cloud upon so melancholy a prospect as this shews us,—it is surely the difficulty and hazard of having all the work of the day to perform in the last hour;—of making an atonement to God, when we have no sacrifice to offer him, but the dregs and infirmities of those days, when we could have no pleasure in them.

How far God may be pleased to accept such late and imperfect services, is beyond the intention of this discourse. Whatever stress some may lay upon it, a death-bed repentance is but a weak and slender plank to trust our all upon. Such as it is;—to that, and God's infinite mercies, we commit them, who will not employ that time and opportunity he has given to provide a better security.

That we may all make a right use of the time allotted us,—God grant, through the merits of his Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

SERMON XXXVIII.

ON ENTHUSIASM.

ST. JOHN, XV. 5.

——For without me, ye can do nothing.

OUR Saviour, in the former part of the verse, having told his disciples,—That he was the vine, and that they were only branches;—intimating, in what a degree their good fruits, as well as the success of all their endeavours, were to depend upon his communications with them;—he closes the illustration with the inference from it, in the words of the text,—For without me, ye can do nothing.—In the eleventh chapter to the Romans, where the manner is explained in which a christian stands by faith,—there is a like illustration made use of, and probably with an eye to this—where St. Paul instructs us,—that a good man stands as the branch of a wild olive does, when it is grafted into a good olive-tree;—and that is,—it flourishes not through its own virtue, but in virtue of the root,—and such a root as is naturally not its own.

It is very remarkable in that passage,—that the Apostle calls a bad man a wild olive-*tree*;—not barely a branch (as in the other case), but a tree, which, having a root of its own, supports itself, and stands in its own strength, and brings forth its own fruit.—And so does every bad man in re-

spect of the wild and sour fruit of a vicious and corrupt heart.—According to the resemblance,—if the apostle intended it,—he is a tree,—has a root of his own,—and fruitfulness, such as it is, with a power to bring it forth without help. But in respect of religion, and the moral improvements of virtue and goodness,—the apostle calls us, and reason tell us, we are no more than a branch; and all our fruitfulness, and all our support,—depend so much upon the influence and communications of God,—that without him we can do nothing,—as our Saviour declares in the text.—There is scarce any point in our religion wherein men have run into such violent extremes as in the senses given to this, and such-like declarations in Scripture,—of our sufficiency being of God;—some understanding them so, as to leave no meaning at all in them;—others,—too much:—the one interpreting the gifts and influences of the spirit, so as to destroy the truth of all such promises and declarations in the gospel;—the other carrying their notions of them so high, as to destroy the reason of the gospel itself,—and render the christian religion, which consists of sober and consistent doctrines,—the most intoxicated,—the most wild and unintelligible institution that ever was in the world.

This being premised, I know not how I can more seasonably engage your attention this day, than by a short examination of each of these errors;—in doing which, as I shall take some pains to reduce both the extremes of them to reason,—

it will necessarily lead me, at the same time, to mark the safe and true doctrine of our church, concerning the promised influences and operations of the spirit of God upon our hearts;—which, however depreciated through the first mistake,—or boasted of beyond measure through the second,—must nevertheless be so limited and understood,—as, on one hand, to make the gospel of Christ consistent with itself,—and, on the other, to make it consistent with reason and common sense.

If we consider the many express declarations, wherein our Saviour tells his followers, before his crucifixion,—That God would send his spirit the comforter amongst them, to supply his place in their hearts;—and, as in the text,—that without him, they could do nothing;—If we conceive them as spoken to his disciples, with an immediate view to the emergencies they were under, from their *natural* incapacities of finishing the great work he had left them, and building upon that large foundation he had laid,—without some extraordinary help and guidance to carry them through,—no one can dispute that evidence and confirmation which was after given of its truth;—as our Lord's disciples were illiterate men, consequently unskilled in the arts and acquired ways of persuasion.—Unless this want had been supplied,—the first obstacle to their labours must have discouraged and put an end to them for ever.—As they had no language but their own, without the gift of tongues they could not have preached the gospel except in Judæa;—and as they had no authority of their own,—with-

out the supernatural one of signs and wonders,—they could not vouch for the truth of it beyond the limits where it was first transacted.—In this work doubtless all their sufficiency and power of acting was immediately from God;—his holy spirit, as he had promised them, so it gave them a mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist.—So that without him,—without these extraordinary gifts, in the most literal sense of the words, they *could* do nothing.—But besides this plain application of the text to those particular persons and times, when God's spirit was poured down in that signal manner held sacred to this day,—there is something in them to be extended further, which christians of all ages, and I hope of all denominations, have still a claim and trust in,—and that is, the ordinary assistance and influences of the spirit of God in our hearts, for moral and virtuous improvements;—these, both in their natures as well as intentions, being altogether different from the others above-mentioned conferred upon the disciples of our Lord.—The one were miraculous gifts,—in which the endowed person contributed nothing, which advanced human nature above itself, and raised all its projectile springs above their fountains; enabling them to speak and act such things, and in such manner, as was impossible for men not inspired and preternaturally upheld.—In the other case, the helps spoken of were the influences of God's spirit, which upheld us from falling below the dignity of our nature;—that divine assistance

which graciously kept us from falling, and enabled us to perform the holy professions of our religion. —Though these are equally called spiritual gifts,—they are not, as in the first case, the entire works of the spirit,—but the calm co-operations of it with our own endeavours; and are ordinarily what every sincere and well-disposed christian has reason to pray for, and expect from the same fountain of strength,—who has promised to give his holy spirit to them that ask it.

From this point, which is the true doctrine of our church,—the two parties begin to divide both from it and each other,—each of them equally misapplying these passages of Scripture, and wresting them to extremes equally pernicious.——

To begin with the first; of whom should you enquire the explanation and meaning of this or of other texts,—wherein the assistance of God's grace and holy spirit is implied as necessary to sanctify our nature, and enable us to serve and please God? —They will answer,—that no doubt all our parts and abilities are the gifts of God,—who is the original author of our nature,—and, of consequence, of all that belongs thereto. "That as by him we live, and move, and have our being,"—we must in course depend upon him for all our actions whatsoever,—since we must depend upon him even for our life, and for every moment of its continuance. —That from this view of our state and natural dependance, it is certain, and they will say,—We can do nothing without his help.—But then they will add,—that it concerns us no farther as *chris-*

tians, than as we are *men*;—the sanctity of our lives, the religious habits and improvements of our hearts, in no other sense depending upon God, than the most indifferent of our actions, or the natural exercise of any of the other powers he has given us.—Agreeably with this,—that the spiritual gifts spoken of in Scripture, are to be understood by way of accommodation, to signify the natural or acquired gifts of a man's mind; such as memory, fancy, wit, and eloquence; which, in a strict and philosophical sense, may be called spiritual;—because they transcend the mechanical powers of matter,—and proceed more or less from the rational soul, which is a spiritual substance.

Whether these ought, in propriety, to be called spiritual gifts, I shall not contend, as it seems a mere dispute about words;—but it is enough that the interpretation cuts the knot, instead of untying it; and besides, explains away all kind of meaning in the above promises.—And the error of them seems to arise, in the first place, from not distinguishing that these spiritual gifts,—if they must be called so,—such as memory, fancy, and wit, and other endowments of the mind, which are known by the name of natural parts, belong merely to us as men;—and whether the different degrees, by which we excel each other in them, arise from a natural difference of our souls,—or a happier disposition of the organical parts of us,—they are such, however, as God originally bestows upon us, and with which, in a great measure, we are sent into the world. But the moral gifts of the Holy Ghost

—which are more commonly called the fruits of the spirit,—cannot be confined within this description.—We come not into the world equipt with virtues, as we do with talents;—if we did, we should come into the world with that which robbed virtue of its best title both to present commendation and future reward.—The gift of continency depends not, as these affirm, upon a mere coldness of the constitution,—or patience and humility from an insensibility of it; but they are virtues insensibly wrought in us by the endeavours of our own wills and concurrent influences of a gracious agent; and the religious improvements arising from thence, are so far from being the effects of nature, and a fit disposition of the several parts and organical powers given us,—that the contrary is true;—namely,—that the stream of our affections and appetites but too naturally carries us the other way.—For this, let any man lay his hand upon his heart, and reflect what has passed within him, in the several conflicts of meekness,—temperance,—chastity, and other self-denials,—and he will need no better argument for his conviction.—

This hint leads to the true answer to the above misinterpretation of the text,—That we *depend* upon God in no other sense for our virtues,—than we necessarily do for every thing else; and that the fruits of the spirit are merely the determinations and efforts of our own reason,—and as much our own accomplishments, as any other improve-

ments are the effect of our own diligence and industry.

This account by the way, is opposite to the apostle's—who tells us,—It is God that worketh in us both to do and will, of his good pleasure;—It is true,—though we are born ignorant,—we can make ourselves skilful;—we can acquire arts and sciences by our own application and study.—But the case is not the same in respect of goodness.—We can acquire arts and sciences, because we lie under no natural indisposition or backwardness to that acquirement.—For nature, though it be corrupt, yet still it is curious and busy after knowledge.—But it does not appear, that to goodness and sanctity of manners we have the same natural propensity.—Lusts within, and temptations without, set up so strong a confederacy against it, as we are never able to surmount by our own strength.—However firmly we may think we stand,—the best of us are but upheld, and graciously kept upright; and whenever this divine assistance is withdrawn,—or suspended,—all history, especially the sacred, is full of melancholy instances of what man is, when God leaves him to himself,—that he is even a thing of nought.

Whether it was from a conscious experience of this truth in themselves,—or some traditions handed from the Scripture account of it;—or that it was, in some measure, deducible from the principles of reason,—in the writings of some of the wisest of the heathen philosophers, we find the

strongest traces of the persuasion of God's assisting men to virtue and probity of manners.—One of the greatest masters of reasoning amongst the ancients acknowledges, that nothing great and exalted can be atchieved, *sine divino afflatu*;—and Seneca, to the same purpose, *nulla mens bona sine Deo*;—that no soul can be good without divine assistance.—Now whatever comments may be put upon such passages in their writings,—it is certain those in Scripture can receive no other to be consistent with themselves, than what has been given.—And though, in vindication of human liberty, it is as certain on the other hand,—that education, precepts, examples, pious inclinations, and practical diligence, are great and meritorious advances towards a religious state;—yet the state itself is got and finished by God's grace; and the concurrence of his spirit upon tempers thus happily predisposed,—and honestly making use of such fit means:—and unless thus much is understood from them,—the several expressions in Scripture, where the offices of the Holy Ghost conducive to this end, are enumerated;—such as cleansing, guiding, renewing, comforting, strengthening, and establishing us,—are a set of unintelligible words, which may amuse, but can convey little light to the understanding.

This is all I have time left to say at present upon the first error of those, who, by too loose an interpretation of the gifts and fruits of the spirit, explain away the whole sense and meaning of them, and thereby render not only the promises, but the

comforts of them too, of none effect.—Concerning which error, I have only to add this by way of extenuation of it,—that I belive the great and unedifying rout made about sanctification and regeneration, in the middle of the last century,—and the enthusiastic extravagances into which the communications of the spirit have been carried by so many deluded or deluding people in this, are two of the great causes which have driven many a sober man into the opposite extreme, against which I have argued.—Now if the dread of savoring too much of religion in their interpretations has done this ill service,—let us inquire, on the other hand, whether the affectation of too *much* religion in the other extreme, has not misled others full as far from truth, and further from the reason and sobriety of the gospel, than the first.

I have already proved by Scripture arguments, that the influence of the holy spirit of God is necessary to render the imperfect sacrifice of our obedience pleasing to our Maker.—He hath promised to "perfect his strength in our weakness."—With this assurance we ought to be satisfied;—especially since our Saviour has thought proper to mortify all scrupulous inquiries into operations of this kind, by comparing them to the wind, "which "bloweth where it listeth; and thou hearest the "sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it "cometh, or whither it goeth:—so is every one "that is born of the spirit."—Let humble gratitude acknowledge the effect, unprompted by an idle curiosity to explain the cause.

We are told, without this assistance, we can do nothing;—we are told, from the same authority, we can do all through Christ that strengthens us. —We are commanded to "work out our own sal-"vation with fear and trembling." The reason immediately follows: "for it is God that worketh "in you, both to will and to do, of his own good "pleasure."—From these, and many other repeated passages, it is evident, that the assistances of grace were not intended to destroy, but to cooperate with the endeavours of man,—and are derived from God in the same manner as all natural powers.—Indeed, without this interpretation, how could the Almighty address himself to man as a rational being?—how could his actions be his own? —how could he be considered as a blameable or rewardable creature?

From this account of the consistent opinions of a sober-minded christian, let us take a view of the mistaken enthusiast.—See him ostentatiously clothed with the outward garb of sanctity, to attract the eyes of the vulgar.—See a cheerful demeanor, the natural result of an easy and self-applauding heart, studiously avoided as criminal.—See his countenance overspread with a melancholy gloom and despondence;—as if religion, which is evidently calculated to make us happy in this life as well as the next, was the parent of sullenness and discontent.—Hear him pouring forth his pharisaical ejaculations on his journey, or in the streets.—Hear him boasting of extraordinary communications with the God of all knowledge, and

at the same time offending against the common rules of his own native language, and the plainer dictates of common sense.—Hear him arrogantly thanking his God that he is not as other men are; and, with more than papal uncharitableness, very liberally allotting the portion of the damned to every Christian whom he, partial judge, deems less perfect than himself—to every Christian who is walking on in the paths of duty with sober vigilance, aspiring to perfection by progressive attainments, and seriously endeavouring, through a rational faith in his Redeemer, to make his calling and election sure.

There have been no sects in the Christian world, however absurd, which have not endeavoured to support their opinions by arguments drawn from Scripture, misinterpreted or misapplied.

We had a melancholy instance of this in our own country, in the last century, when the church of Christ, as well as the government, during that period of national confusion, was torn asunder into various sects and factions;—when some men pretended to have Scripture precepts, parables, or prophecies, to plead in favour of the most impious absurdities that falsehood could advance. The same spirit which prevailed amongst the fanatics, seems to have gone forth among these modern enthusiasts. Faith, the distinguishing characteristic of a Christian, is defined by them not as a rational assent of the understanding, to truths which are established by indisputable authority, but as a violent persuasion of mind, that they are instantaneously

become the children of God; that the whole score of their sins is for ever blotted out, without the payment of one tear of repentance.—Pleasing doctrine this, to the fears and passions of mankind!—promising fair to gain proselytes of the vicious and impenitent.

Pardons and indulgences are the great support of papal power; but these modern empirics in religion have improved upon the scheme, pretending to have discovered an infallible nostrum for all incurables, such as will preserve them for ever.—And notwithstanding we have instances of notorious offenders among the warmest advocates for sinless perfection, the charm continues powerful.—Did these visionary notions of an heated imagination tend only to amuse the fancy, they might be treated with contempt;—but when they depreciate all moral attainments,—when the suggestions of a frantic brain are blasphemously ascribed to the holy spirit of God,—when faith and divine love are placed in opposition to practical virtues, they then become the objects of aversion. In one sense, indeed, many of these deluded people demand our tenderest compassion, whose disorder is in the head rather than in the heart; and who call for the aid of a physician who can cure the distempered state of the body, rather than one who may sooth the anxieties of the mind.

Indeed, in many cases, they seem so much above the skill of either, that unless God in his mercy rebuke this spirit of enthusiasm which is gone out amongst us, no one can pretend to say how far it

may go, or what mischiefs it may do in these kingdoms. Already it has taught us as much blasphemous language; and, if it goes on, by the samples given us in their journals, will fill us with as many legendary accounts of visions and revelations, as we have formerly had from the church of Rome. And for any security we have against it, when time shall serve, it may as effectually convert the professors of it, even into popery itself, consistent with their own principles;—for they have nothing more to do than to say, that the spirit which inspired them, has signified that the Pope is inspired as well as they, and consequently is infallible.—After which, I cannot see how they can possibly refrain going to mass, consistent with their own principles.

Thus much for these two opposite errors:—the examination of which has taken up so much time, that I have little left to add, but to beg of God, by the assistance of his Holy Spirit, to preserve us equally from both extremes, and enable us to form such right and worthy apprehensions of our holy religion, that it may never suffer, through the coolness of our conceptions of it, on one hand, or the immoderate heat of them on the other;—but that we may at all times see it as it is, and as it was designed by its blessed Founder, as the most rational, sober, and consistent institution that could have been given to the sons of men.

Now to God, &c.

SERMON XXXIX.

ETERNAL ADVANTAGES OF RELIGION.

ECCLESIASTES XII. 13.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter,—Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

THE wise man, in the beginning of this book, had proposed it as a grand query to be discussed, —"To find out what was good for the sons of "men, which they should do under the heavens, "all the days of their lives:"—that is, what was the fittest employment, and the chief and proper business, which they should apply themselves to in this world.—And here, in the text, after a fair discussion of the question, he asserts it to be the business of religion,—the fearing God, and keeping his commandments. This was the conclusion of the whole matter, and the natural result of all his debates and inquiries.—And I am persuaded, the more observations we make upon the short life of man, the more we experience, and the longer trials we have of the world, and the several pretensions it offers to our happiness, the more we shall be engaged to think, like him, that we can never find what we look for in any other thing which we do under the heavens, except in that of duty and obedience to God. In the course of the wise man's examination of this point, we find a

great many beautiful reflections upon human affairs, all tending to illustrate the conclusion he draws; and as they are such as are apt to offer themselves to the thoughts of every serious and considerate man, I cannot do better than renew the impressions, by retouching the principal arguments of his discourse, before I proceed to the general use and application of the whole.

In the former part of his book, he had taken into his consideration those several states of life to which men usually apply themselves for happiness; first, —learning, wisdom; next,—mirth, jollity, and pleasure; then power and greatness, riches and possessions.—All of which are so far from answering the end for which they were at first pursued, that, by a great variety of arguments, he proves them severally to be so many "sore travels which "God had given to the sons of men to be exer-"cised therewith;"—and instead of being any, or all of them, our proper end and employment, or sufficient to our happiness, he makes it plain, by a series of observations upon the life of man, that they are ever likely to end with others where they had done with him,—that is, in vanity and vexation of spirit.

Then he takes notice of the several accidents of life, which perpetually rob us of what little sweets the fruition of these objects might seem to promise us, both with regard to our endeavours and our persons in this world.

1st, With regard to our endeavours, he shews that the most likely ways and means are not always

effectual for the attaining of their end:—that, in general,—the utmost that human councils and prudence can provide for, is to take care, when they contend in a race, that they be swifter than those who run against them;—or when they are to fight a battle, that they be stronger than those whom they are to encounter.—And yet afterwards, in the ninth chapter, he observes, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;—neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor favor to men of skill;—but time and chance happens to them all. That there are secret workings in human affairs, which overrule all human contrivance, and counterplot the wisest of our councils, in so strange and unexpected a manner, as to cast a damp upon our best schemes and warmest endeavours.

And then, for those accidents to which our persons are as liable as our labours,—he observes these three things;—first, the natural infirmities of our bodies, which alternately lay us open to the sad changes of pain and sickness; which, in the fifth chapter, he styles wrath and sorrow; under which, when a man lies languishing, none of his worldly enjoyments will signify much. Like one that singeth songs with a heavy heart, neither mirth,—nor power,—nor riches, shall afford him ease,——nor will all their force be able so to stay the stroke of nature,—"but that he shall be cut "off in the midst of his days, and then all his "thoughts perish."——Or else,—what is no uncommon spectacle, in the midst of all his luxury,

he may waste away the greatest part of his life, with much weariness and anguish; and with the long torture of an unrelenting disease, he may wish himself to go down into the grave, and to be set at liberty from all his possessions, and all his misery, at the same time.

2dly, If it be supposed,—that by the strength of spirits, and the natural cheerfulness of a man's temper, he should escape these, "and live many "years, and rejoice in them all,"—which is not the lot of many;—yet, "he must remember the days of darkness;"—that is,—they who devote themselves to a perpetual round of mirth and pleasure, cannot so manage matters as to avoid the thoughts of their *future states*, and the anxiety about what shall become of them hereafter, when they are to depart out of this world;—that they cannot so crowd their heads, and fill up their time with other matters,—but that the remembrance of this will sometimes be uppermost,—and thrust itself upon their minds whenever they are retired and serious. And as this will naturally present to them a dark prospect of their future happiness,—it must, at the same time, prove no small damp and allay to what they would enjoy at present.

But, in the third place, suppose a man should be able to avoid sickness,—and to put the trouble of *these thoughts* likewise far from him,—yet there is something else which he cannot possibly decline;—old age will unavoidably steal upon him, with all the infirmities of it,——when (as he expresses it) "the grinders shall be few, and appetite ceases;

"when those who look out at the windows shall "be darkened, and the keepers of the house shall tremble,—when a man shall become a burden to himself, and to his friends;—when, perhaps, those of his nearest relations, whom he hath most obliged by kindness, shall think it time for him to depart, to creep off the stage, and make room for the succeeding generations.

And then, after a little funeral pomp of "mourn- "ers going about the streets,"—a man shall be buried out of the way, and in a year or two be as much forgotten, as if he had never existed.—For there is no remembrance (says he) of the wise more than the fool;—seeing that which now is, in the days to come, shall be forgotten; every day producing something which seems new and strange, to take up men's talk and wonder, and to drown the memory of former persons and actions.—

And I appeal to any rational man, whether these are not some of the most material reflections about human affairs,—which occur to every one who gives himself the least leisure to think about them; Now, from all these premises put together, Solomon infers this short conclusion in the text,—That to fear God and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man:—that, to be serious in the matter of religion, and careful about our future state, is that which, after all our other experiments, will be found to be our chief happiness,—our greatest interest,—our greatest wisdom,—and that which most of all deserves our care and application.—This must ever be the last result, and the

upshot of every wise man's observations upon all these transitory things, and upon the vanity of their several pretences to our well-being;—and we may depend upon it as an everlasting truth, that we can never find what we seek for in any other course, or any other object,—but this one; and the more we know and think, and the more experience we have of the world, and of ourselves, the more we are convinced of this truth, and led back by it to rest our souls upon that God from whence we came. Every consideration upon the life of man tends to engage us to this point,—to be in earnest in the concernment of religion; to love and fear God;—to provide for our true interest,—and do ourselves the most effectual service,—by devoting ourselves to him,—and always thinking of him, as he is the true and final happiness of a reasonable and immortal spirit.

And indeed one would think it next to impossible,—did not the commonness of the thing take off from the wonder,—that a man who thinks at all,—should let his whole life be a contradiction to such obvious reflections.

The vanity and emptiness of worldly goods and enjoyments,—the shortness and uncertainty of life,—the unalterable event hanging over our heads,—"that in a few days, we must all of "us go to that place from whence we shall not "return;—the certainty of this, the uncertainty of the time when, the immortality of the soul, the doubtful and momentous issues of eternity, the terrors of damnation, and the glorious things which

are spoken of the city of God,—are meditations so obvious, and so naturally check and block up a man's way,—are so very interesting, and, above all, so unavoidable,—that it is astonishing how it was possible, at any time, for mortal man to have his head full of any thing else!—And yet, was the same person to take a view of the state of the world, how slight an observation would convince him, that the wonder lay, in fact, on the other side;—and that as wisely as we all discourse and philosophise *de contemptu mundi et fugâ sæculi*—yet for one who really acts in the world—consistent with his own reflections upon it,—that there are multitudes who seem to take aim at nothing higher;—and, as empty a thing as it is,—are so dazzled with, as to think it meet to build tabernacles of rest upon it,—and say, "it is good to be here."—Whether as an able inquirer into this paradox guesses,—whether it is, that men do not heartily believe such a thing as a future state of happiness and misery,—or if they do,—that they do not actually and seriously consider it,—but suffer it to lie dormant and unactive within them, and so are as little affected with it, as if in truth they believed it not;—or whether they look upon it through that end of the perspective which represents as afar off—and so are more forcibly drawn by the nearer though the lesser load-stone;—whether these, or whatever other cause may be assigned for it—the observation is incontestible, that the bulk of mankind, in passing through this vale of misery,—use it "not "as a well" to refresh and allay,—but fully to

quench and satisfy their thirst;—minding or (as the Apostle says) relishing earthly things,——making them the end and sum-total of their desires and wishes,——and, in one word——loving this world—just as they are commanded to love God;——that is,—"with all their heart, with all their "soul,"—with all their mind and strength.—But this is not the strangest part of this paradox. A man shall not only lean and rest upon the world with his whole stress,—but, in many instances, shall live notoriously bad and vicious;—when he is reproved, he shall seem convinced;—when he is observed, he shall be ashamed;—when he pursues his sin, he will do it in the dark;—and when he has done it, shall even be dissatisfied with himself:——yet still, this shall produce no alteration in his conduct.—Tell him he shall one day die;—or bring the event still nearer, and shew, that, according to the course of nature, he cannot possibly live many years,—he will sigh, perhaps, and tell you he is convinced of that as much as reason and experience can make him:——proceed and urge to him, that after death comes judgment, and that he will certainly there be dealt with by a just God according to his actions;—he will thank God he is no deist, and tell you, with the same grave face, he is thoroughly convinced of that too;—and as he believes, no doubt he trembles too;—and yet after all, with all this conviction upon his mind, you will see him still persevere in the same course,—and commit his sin with as certain an event and resolution, as if he knew no argument against it.——

These notices of things, however terrible and true, pass through his understanding as an eagle through the air, that leaves no path behind.

So that, upon the whole, instead of abounding with occasions to set us seriously on thinking, the world may dispense with many more calls of this kind;—and were they seven times as many as they are,—considering what insufficient use we make of those we have, all I fear would be little enough to bring these things to our remembrance as often, and engage us to lay them to our hearts with that affectionate concern, which the weight and interest of them requires at our hands.—Sooner or later, the most inconsiderate of us all shall find, with Solomon,—that to do this effectually, is the whole of man.

And I cannot conclude this discourse upon his words better than with a short and earnest exhortation, that the solemnity of this season, and the meditations to which it is devoted, may lead you up to the true knowledge and practice of the same point of fearing God and keeping his commandments,—and convince you, as it did him, of the indispensable necessity of making that the business of a man's life which is the chief end of his being,—the eternal happiness and salvation of his soul.

Which may God grant, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

SERMON XL.

ASA—A THANKSGIVING SERMON.

2 CHRONICLES, XV. 14.

And they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.—And all the men of Judah rejoiced at the oath.

It will be necessary to give a particular account of what was the occasion, as well as the nature of the oath which the men of Judah sware unto the Lord;—which will explain not only the reasons why it became a matter of so much joy to them, but likewise admit of an application suitable to the purposes of this solemn assembly.

Abijah, and Asa his son, were successive kings of Judah.—The first came to the crown at the close of a long, and, in the end, a very unsuccessful war, which had gradually wasted the strength and riches of his kingdom.

He was a prince endowed with the talents which the emergencies of his country required, and seemed born to make Judah a victorious, as well as a happy people. The conduct and great success of his arms against Jeroboam, had well established the first;—but his kingdom, which had been so many years the seat of a war, had been so wasted and bewildered, that his reign, good as it was, was too short to accomplish the latter. He died, and

left the work unfinished for his son. Asa succeeded, in the room of Abijah his father, with the truest notions of religion and government that could be fetched either from reason or experience. —His reason told him, that God should be worshipped in simplicity and singleness of heart;—therefore he took away the altars of the strange gods, and broke down their images. His experience told him, that the most successful wars, instead of invigorating, more generally drained away the vitals of government,—and, at the best, ended but in a brighter and more ostentatious kind of poverty and desolation:—therefore he laid aside his sword, and studied the arts of ruling Judah with peace. Conscience would not suffer Asia to sacrifice his subjects to private views of ambition, and wisdom forbad he should suffer them to offer up themselves to the pretence of public ones;—since enlargement of empire, by the destruction of its people (the natural and only valuable source of strength and riches), was a dishonest and miserable exchange. And however well the glory of a conquest might appear in the eyes of a common beholder, yet, when bought at that costly rate, a father to his country would behold the triumphs which attended it, and weep, as it passed by him. Amidst all the glare and jollity of the day, the parent's eyes would fix attentively upon his child; he would discern him drooping under the weight of his attire, without strength or vigour, his former beauty and comeliness gone off:—he would behold the coat of many colours stained with blood,

and cry,—Alas! they have decked thee with a parent's pride, but not with a parent's care and foresight.

With such affectionate sentiments of government, and just principles of religion, Asa began his reign.—A reign marked out with new æras, and a succession of happier occurrences than what had distinguished former days.

The just and gentle spirit of the prince insensibly stole into the breasts of the people. The men of Judah turned their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks.—By industry and virtuous labour they acquired what by spoil and rapine they might have sought after long in vain. —The traces of their late troubles soon began to wear out.—The cities, which had become ruinous and desolate (the prey of famine and the sword), were now rebuilt, fortified, and made populous.— Peace, security, wealth, and prosperity, seemed to compose the whole history of Asa's reign.—O Judah! what could then have been done more than what was done to make thy people happy?—

What one blessing was withheld, that thou shouldst ever withhold thy thankfulness?—

That thou didst not continually turn thy eyes towards Heaven with an habitual sense of God's mercies, and devoutly praise him for setting Asa over you?—

Were not the public blessings, and the private enjoyments, which every man of Judah derived from them, such as to make the continuance of them desirable?—And what other way was there

to effect it, than to swear unto the Lord, with all your hearts and souls, to perform the covenant made with your fathers?—to secure that favor and interest with the almighty Being, without which the wisdom of this world is foolishness, and the best connected systems of human policy are speculative and airy projects, without foundation or substance. —The history of their own exploits and establishment, since they had become a nation, was a strong confirmation of this doctrine.

But too free and uninterrupted a possession of God Almighty's blessings sometimes (though it seems strange to suppose it) even tempts men to forget him, either from a certain depravity and ingratitude of nature, not to be wrought upon by goodness, or that they are made by it too passionately fond of the present hour, and too thoughtless of its great Author, whose kind providence brought it about. This seemed to have been the case with the men of Judah: for, notwithstanding all that God had done for them, in placing Abijah and Asa his son over them, and inspiring them with hearts and talents proper to retrieve the errors of the foregoing reign, and bring back peace and plenty to the dwellings of Judah;—yet there appears no record of any solemn and religious acknowledgment to God for such signal favors. The people sat down in a thankless security, each man under his vine, to eat and drink, and rose up to play;—more solicitous to enjoy their blessings, than to deserve them.

But this scene of tranquillity was not to subsist

without some change; and it seemed as if Providence at length had suffered the stream to be interrupted, to make them consider whence it flowed, and how necessary it had been all along to their support. The Ethiopians, ever since the beginning of Abijah's reign, until the tenth year of Asa's, had been at peace, or, at least, whatever secret enmity they bore, had made no open attacks upon the kingdom of Judah. And indeed the bad measures which Rehoboam had taken, in the latter part of the reign which immediately preceded theirs, seemed to have saved the Ethiopians the trouble. For Rehoboam, though in the former part of his reign he dealt wisely: yet when he had established his kingdom, and strengthened himself, he forsook the laws of the Lord; he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men, which were brought up with him, and stood before him. Such ill-advised measures, in all probability, had given the enemies of Judah such decisive advantages over her, that they had sat down contented, and for many years enjoyed the fruits of their acquisitions. But the friendship of princes is seldom made up of better materials than those which are every day to be seen in private life,—in which sincerity and affection are not at all considered as ingredients. Change of time and circumstances produces a change of councils and behaviour. Judah, in length of time, had become a fresh temptation, and was worth fighting for:—Her riches and plenty might first make her enemies covet, and then the remembrance of how cheap

and easy a prey she had formerly been, might make them not doubt of obtaining.

By these apparent motives (or whether God, who sometimes over-rules the heart of man, was pleased to turn them by secret ones, to the purposes of his wisdom), the ambition of the Ethiopians revived;—with an host of men, numerous as the sand upon the sea-shore in multitude, they had left their country, and were coming forwards to invade them. What can Judah propose to do in so terrifying a crisis?—where can she betake herself for refuge?—on one hand, her religion and laws are too precious to be given up, or trusted to the hands of a stranger; and, on the other hand, how can so small a kingdom, just recovering strength, surrounded by an army of a thousand thousand men, besides chariots and horses, be able to withstand so powerful a shock?—But here it appeared that those who, in their prosperity, can forget God, do yet remember him in the day of danger and distress; and can begin with comfort to depend upon his providence, when with comfort they can depend upon nothing else.—For when Zerah, the Ethiopian, was come unto the valley of Zephatha at Maretha, Asa, and all the men of Judah and Benjamin, went out against him; and as they went, they cried mightily unto God. And Asa prayed for his people, and he said,—"O "Lord! it is nothing with thee to help, whether "with many, or with them that have no power:— "help us, O Lord our God! for we rest in thee, "and in thy name we go against this multitude.—

"O Lord, thou art our God, let not man prevail "against thee." Success almost seemed a debt due to the piety of the prince, and the contrition of his people. So God smote the Ethopians, and they could not recover themselves:—for they were scattered and utterly destroyed, before the Lord and before his host. And as they returned to Jerusalem from pursuing,—behold the spirit of God came upon Asariah, the son of Oded.—And he went out to meet Asa, and he said unto him,—Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; —the Lord is with you, whilst you are with him; —and if you seek him, he will be found of you, but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. Nothing could more powerfully call home the conscience than so timely an expostulation. The men of Judah and Benjamin, struck with a sense of their late deliverance, and the many other felicities they had enjoyed since Asa was king over them, they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem, in the third month in the fifteenth year of Asa's reign; and they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul:—and they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets, and all Judah rejoiced at the oath.

One may observe a kind of luxuriety in the description, which the holy historian gives of the transport of the men of Judah upon this occasion. And sure, if ever matter of joy was so reasonably founded, as to excuse any excesses in the expres-

sions of it,—this was one:—for without it,—the condition of Judah, though otherwise the happiest, would have been, of all nations under heaven, the most miserable.

Let us suppose a moment, instead of being repulsed, that the enterprise of the Ethiopians had prospered against them,—like other grievous distempers, where the vitals are first attacked,—Asa, their king, would have been sought after and have been made the first sacrifice. He must either have fallen by the sword of battle, or execution;—or, what is worse, he must have survived the ruin of his country by flight,—and worn out the remainder of his days in sorrow, for the afflictions which were come upon him. In some remote corner of the world, the good king would have heard the particulars of Judah's destruction. He would have been told how the country, which had become dear to him by his paternal care, was now utterly laid waste, and all his labour lost;—how the fences which protected it were torn up, and the tender plant within, which he had so long sheltered, was cruelly trodden under foot and devoured. He would hear how Zerah, the Ethiopean, when he had overthrown the kingdom, thought himself bound in conscience to overthrow the religion of it too, and establish his own idolatrous one in its stead. That in pursuance of this, the holy religion, which Asa had reformed, had begun every where to be evil spoken of, and evil entreated:

That it was first banished from the courts of the king's house, and the midst of Jerusalem, and then fled for safety out of the way into the wilderness, and found no city to dwell in:—That Zerah had rebuilt the altars of the strange gods,—which Asa's piety had broken down, and set up their images:

That his commandment was *urgent* that all should fall down and worship the idol he had made;—That, to complete the tale of their miseries, there was no prospect of deliverance for any but the worst of his subjects;—those who, in his reign, had either leaned in their hearts towards these idolatries,—or whose principles and morals were such, that all religions suited them alike. But that the honest and conscientious men of Judah, unable to behold such abominations, hung down every man his head like a bulrush, and put sack-cloth and ashes under him.

This picture of Judah's desolation might be some resemblance of what every of Asa's subjects would probably form to himself, the day he solemnized an exemption from it.—And the transport was natural,—To swear unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets:—to rejoice at the oath which secured their future peace, and celebrate it with all external marks of gladness.

I have at length gone through the story, which gave the occasion to this religious act which is recorded of the men of Judah in the text.

I believe there is not one in sacred Scripture

that bids fairer for a parallel to our own times, or that would admit of an application more suitable to the solemnity of this day.

But men are apt to be struck with likenesses in so different a manner, from the different points of view in which they stand, as well as their diversity of judgments, that it is generally a very unacceptable piece of officiousness to fix any certain degrees of approach.

In this case, it seems sufficient,—that those who will discern the least resemblance, will discern enough to make them seriously comply with the devotion of the day;—and that those who are affected with it in a stronger manner, and see the blessing of a protestant king in its fairest light, with all the mercies which made way for it, will have still more abundant reason to adore that good Being, which has all along protected it from the enemies which have risen up to do it violence;—but more especially, in a late instance, by turning down the councils of the froward headlong,—and confounding the devices of the crafty,—so that their hands could not perform their enterprize. —Though this event, for many reasons, will ever be told amongst the felicities of these days;—yet for none more so,—than that it has given us a fresh mark of the continuation of God Almighty's favor to us:—a part of that great complicated blessing for which we are gathered together to return him thanks.

Let us, therefore, I beseech you, endeavour to do it in the way which becomes wise men, and

which is likely to be most acceptable;—and that is,—to pursue the intentions of his providence, in giving us the occasion—to become better men, and, by an holy and an honest conversation, make ourselves capable of enjoying what God has done for us.—In vain shall we celebrate the day with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, if we do not do it likewise with the internal and more certain marks of sincerity, a reformation and purity in our manners.—It is impossible a sinful people can either be grateful to God, or properly loyal to their prince.—They cannot be grateful to the one, because they live not under a sense of his mercies;—nor can they be loyal to the other, because they daily offend in two of the tenderest points which concern his welfare. By first disengaging the providence of God from taking to our part, and then giving a heart to our adversaries to lift their hands against us, who must know, that, if we forsake God, God will forsake us.—Their hopes, their designs, their wickedness against us, can only be built upon ours towards God.

For if they did not think we did evil, they durst not hope we could perish.

Cease, therefore, to do evil;—for by following righteousness, you will make the hearts of your enemies faint, they will turn their backs against your indignation, and their weapons will fall from their hands.

Which may God grant, through the merits and mediation of his Son Jesus Christ, to whom be all honor, &c. Amen.

SERMON XLI.

FOLLOW PEACE.

HEBREWS, XII. 14.

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

THE great end and design of our holy religion, next to the main view of reconciling us to God, was to reconcile us to each other;—by teaching us to subdue all those unfriendly dispositions in our nature, which unfit us for happiness, and the social enjoyment of the many blessings which God has enabled us to partake of in this world, miserable as it is in many respects.—Could christianity persuade the professors of it into this temper, and engage us, as its doctrine requires, to go on and exalt our natures, and, after the subduction of the most unfriendly of our passions, to plant, in the room of them, all those (more natural to the soil) humane and benevolent inclinations, which, in imitation of the perfections of God, should dispose us to extend our love and goodness to our fellow-creatures, according to the extent of our abilities;—in like manner, as the goodness of God extends itself over all the works of the creation:—could this be accomplished,—the world would be worth living in:—and might be considered by us as a foretaste of what we should enter upon hereafter.

But such a system, you'll say, is merely visionary:—and, considering man as a creature so beset with selfishness, and other fretful passions that propensity prompts him to, though it is to be wished, it is not to be expected.—But our religion enjoins us to approach as near this fair pattern as we can; and, if it be possible, as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men;—where the term,—if possible, I own, implies it may not only be difficult, but sometimes impossible.—Thus the words of the text,—Follow peace,—may by some be thought to imply,—that this desirable blessing may sometimes fly from us:—but still we are required to follow it, and not cease the pursuit, till we have used all warrantable methods to regain and settle it:—because, adds the apostle, without this frame of mind, no man shall see the Lord. For heaven is the region, as well as the recompence, of peace and benevolence; and such as do not desire and promote it here, are not qualified to enjoy it hereafter.

For this cause in Scripture language,—peace is always spoke of as the great and comprehensive blessing, which included in it all manner of happiness;—and to wish peace to any house or person, was, in one word, to wish them all that was good and desirable.—Because happiness consists in the inward complacency and satisfaction of the mind; and he who has such a disposition of soul, as to acquiesce and rest contented with all the events of providence, can want nothing this world can give him.—Agreeable to this, that short but most com-

prehensive hymn, sung by angels at our Saviour's birth; declaratory of the joy and happy ends of his incarnation,—after glory, in the first, to God,—the next note which sounded was, Peace upon earth, and good-will to men. It was a public wish of happiness to mankind, and implied a solemn charge to pursue the means that would ever lead to it.—And, in truth, the good tidings of the gospel are nothing else but a grand message and embassy of peace, to let us know, that our peace is made in heaven.

The Prophet Isaiah styles our Saviour the Prince of Peace, long before he came into the world;—and to answer the title, he made choice to enter into it at a time when all nations were at peace with each other; which was in the days of Augustus,—when the temple of Janus was shut, and all the alarms of war were hushed and silenced throughout the world.—At his birth, the host of heaven descended, and proclaimed peace on earth, as the best state and temper the world could be in to receive and welcome the Author of it.—His future conversation and doctrine, here upon earth, was every way agreeable with his peaceable entrance upon it; the whole course of his life being but one great example of meekness, peace, and patience.—At his death, it was the only legacy he bequeathed to his followers. My peace I give unto you.—How far this has taken place, or been actually enjoyed;—is not my intention to enlarge upon; any further than just to observe how precious a bequest it was from the many miseries and

calamities which have, and ever will, ensue from the want of it.—If we look into the larger circle of the world,—what desolations, dissolutions of government, and invasions of property!—what rapine, plunder, and profanation of the most sacred rights of mankind, are the certain unhappy effects of it!—fields dyed in blood,—the cries of orphans and widows, bereft of their best help, too fully instruct us.—Look into private life,—behold how good and pleasant a thing it is to live together in unity;—it is like the precious ointment poured upon the head of Aaron, that run down to his skirts;—importing, that this balm of life is felt and enjoyed, not only by governors of kingdoms, but is derived down to the lowest rank of life; and tasted in the most private recesses;—all, from the king to the peasant, are refreshed with its blessings, without which we can find no comfort in any thing this world can give.—It is this blessing gives every one to sit quietly under his vine, and reap the fruits of his labour and industry;—in one word, —which bespeaks who is the bestower of it—it is that only which keeps up the harmony and order of the world, and preserves every thing in it from ruin and confusion.

There is one saying of our Saviour's recorded by St. Matthew, which, at first sight, seems to carry some opposition to this doctrine;—I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword.—But this reaches no farther than the bare words, not entering so deep as to affect the sense, or imply any contradiction;—intimating only,—that the preach-

ing of the gospel will prove the event, through sundry unhappy causes, such as prejudices, the corruption of men's hearts, a passion for idolatry and superstition, the occasion of much variance and division even amongst nearest relations;—yea, and oft-times of bodily death, and many calamities and persecutions, which actually ensued upon the first preachers and followers of it.—Or the words may be understood,—as a beautiful description of the inward contests and opposition which christianity would occasion in the heart of man, from its oppositions to the violent passions of our nature, which would engage us in a perpetual warfare. This was not only a sword,—a division betwixt nearest kindred;—but it was dividing a man against himself;—setting up an opposition to an interest long established,—strong by nature,—more so by uncontrolled custom.—This is verified every hour in the struggles for mastery betwixt the principles of the world, the flesh, and the devil;—which set up so strong a confederacy, that there is need of all the helps which reason and christianity can offer to bring them down.

But this contention is not that against which such exhortations in the gospel are levelled;—for the Scripture must be interpreted by Scripture, and be made consistent with itself.—And we find the distinguishing marks and doctrines, by which all men were to know who were Christ's disciples,—was that benevolent frame of mind towards all our fellow-creatures, which, by itself, is a sufficient security for the particular social duty here recom-

mended;—so far from meditations of war;—for love thinketh no evil to his neighbour;—so far from doing any, it harbours not the least thought of it;—but, on the contrary, rejoices with them that rejoice, and weeps with them that weep.

This debt christianity has highly exalted; though it is a debt that we were sensible of before, and acknowledged to be owed to human nature,—which, as we all partake of,—so ought we to pay it in a suitable respect.—For, as men, we are allied together in the natural bond of brotherhood, and are members one of another.—We have the same Father in heaven, who made us and takes care of us all.—Our earthly extraction too is nearer alike, than the pride of the world cares to be reminded of:—for Adam was the father of us all, and Eve the mother of all living.—The prince and the beggar sprung from the same stock, as wide asunder as the branches are.—So that, in this view, the most upstart family may vie antiquity, and compare families with the greatest monarchs.—We are all formed too of the same mould, and must equally return to the same dust.—So that, to love our neighbour, and live quietly with him, is to live at peace with ourselves.—He is but self-multiplied, and enlarged into another form; and to be unkind or cruel to him, is but, as Solomon observes of the unmerciful, to be cruel to our own flesh.—As a farther motive and engagement to this peaceable commerce with each other,—God has placed us all in one another's power by turns,—in a condition of mutual need and dependance. There is

no man so liberally stocked with earthly blessings, as to be able to live without another man's aid.—God, in his wisdom, has so dispensed his gifts, in various kinds and measures, as to render us helpful, and make a social intercourse indispensable.—The prince depends on the labour and industry of the peasant;—and the wealth and honor of the greatest persons are fed and supported from the same source.

This the Apostle hath elegantly set forth to us by the familiar resemblance of the natural body;—wherein there are many members, and all have not the same office; but the different faculties and operations of each, are for the use and benefit of the whole.—The eye sees not for itself, but for the other members;—and is set up as a light to direct them:—The feet serve to support and carry about the other parts; and the hands act and labour for them all. It is the same in states, and kingdoms, wherein there are many members, yet each in their several functions and employments;—which, if peaceably discharged, are for the harmony of the whole state.—Some are eyes and guides to the blind;—others feet to the lame and impotent;—some to supply the place of the head, to assist with council and direction;—others the hand, to be useful by their labour and industry.—To make this link of dependance still stronger,—there is a great portion of mutability in all human affairs, to make benignity of temper not only our duty, but our interest and wisdom.—There is no condition in life so fixed and permanent as to be out of dan-

gor, or the reach of change:—and we all may depend upon it, that we shall take our turns of wanting and desiring.—By how many unforeseen causes may riches take wing!—The crowns of princes may be shaken, and the greatest that ever awed the world have experienced what the turn of the wheel can do. That which hath happened to one man, may befall another; and, therefore, that excellent rule of our Saviour's ought to govern us in all our actions,—Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you also to them likewise.—Time and chance happen to all;—and the most affluent may be stript of all, and find his worldly comforts like so many withered leaves dropping from him.—Sure nothing can better become us, than hearts so full of our dependance as to overflow with mercy, and pity, and good-will towards mankind. To exhort us to this is, in other words, to exhort us to follow peace with all men:—the first is the root,—this the fair fruit and happy product of it.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, in the bowels of mercy, let us put away anger, and malice, and evil speaking;—let us fly all clamour and strife;—let us be kindly affected one to another,—following peace with all men, and holiness, that we may see the Lord.

Which God of his infinite mercy grant, through the merits of his Son, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

SERMON XLII.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

ST. JOHN, v. 39.

Search the Scriptures.

THAT things of the most inestimable use and value, for want of due application and study laid out upon them, may be passed by unregarded, nay, even looked upon with coldness and aversion, is a truth too evident to need enlarging on.—Nor is it less certain that prejudices, contracted by an unhappy education, will sometimes so stop up all the passages to our hearts, that the most amiable objects can never find access, or bribe us by all their charms into justice and impartiality.—It would be passing the tenderest reflection upon the age we live in, to say it is owing to one of these, that those inestimable books, the Sacred Writings, meet so often with a disrelish (what makes the accusation almost incredible) amongst persons who set up for men of taste and delicacy; who pretend to be charmed with what they call beauties and nature in classical authors, and in other things would blush not to be reckoned amongst sound and impartial critics.—But so far has negligence and prepossession stopped their ears against the voice of the charmer, that they turn over those awful sacred pages with inattention and an unbecoming indif-

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ference, unaffected amidst ten thousand sublime and noble passages, which, by the rules of sound criticism and reason, may be demonstrated to be truly eloquent and beautiful.

Indeed the opinion of false Greek and barbarous language in the Old and New Testament, had, for some ages, been a stumbling-block to another set of men, who were professedly great readers and admirers of the ancients.—The Sacred Writings were, by these persons, rudely attacked on all sides: expressions which came not within the compass of their learning, were branded with barbarism and solecism; words which scarce signified any thing but the ignorance of those who laid such groundless charges on them.—Presumptuous man!—Shall he, who is but dust and ashes, dare to find fault with the words of that Being, who first inspired man with language, and taught his mouth to utter;—who opened the lips of the dumb, and made the infant eloquent!—These persons, as they attacked the inspired writings on the foot of critics and men of learning, accordingly have been treated as such:—and though a shorter way might have been gone to work, which was,—that as their accusations reached no farther than the bare words and phraseology of the Bible, they, in no wise, affected the sentiments and soundness of the doctrines, which were conveyed with as much clearness and perspicuity to mankind, as they could have been, had the language been written with the utmost elegance and grammatical nicety. And even though the charge of barbarous idioms could

be made out;—yet the cause of christianity was thereby no ways affected, but remained just in the state they found it.—Yet, unhappily for them, they even miscarried in their favorite point;—there being few, if any at all, of the Scripture expressions, which may not be justified by numbers of parallel modes of speaking, made use of amongst the purest and most authentic Greek authors.—This, an able hand amongst us, not many years ago, has sufficiently made out, and thereby baffled and exposed all their presumptions and ridiculous assertions.—These persons, bad and deceitful as they were, are yet far outgone by a third set of men.—I wish we had not too many instances of them, who, like foul stomachs, that turn the sweetest food to bitterness, upon all occasions endeavour to make merry with sacred Scripture, and turn every thing they meet with therein into banter and burlesque.—But as men of this stamp, by their excess of wickedness and weakness together, have entirely disarmed us from arguing with them as reasonable creatures, it is not only making them too considerable, but likewise to no purpose to spend much time about them, they being, in the language of the Apostle, creatures of no understanding, speaking evil of things they know not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.—Of these two last, the one is disqualified for being argued with, and the other has no occasion for it; they being already silenced.—Yet those that were first mentioned, may not altogether be thought unworthy of our endeavours;—being persons, as was

hinted above, who, though their tastes are so far vitiated that they cannot relish the Sacred Scriptures, yet have imaginations capable of being raised by the fancied excellencies of classical writers.—And indeed these persons claim from us some degree of pity, when, through the unskilfulness of preceptors in their youth, or some other unhappy circumstance in their education, they have been taught to form false and wretched notions of good writing.—When this is the case, it is no wonder they should be more touched and affected with the dressed-up trifles and empty conceits of poets and rhetoricians, than they are with that true sublimity and grandeur of sentiment which glow throughout every page of the inspired writings. By way of information, such should be instructed:—

There are two sorts of eloquence, the one indeed scarce deserves the name of it, which consists chiefly in laboured and polished periods, an over-curious and artificial arrangement of figures, tinsel'd over with a gaudy embellishment of words, which glitter, but convey little or no light to the understanding.—This kind of writing is for the most part much affected and admired by the people of weak judgment and vicious taste; but is a piece of affectation and formality the sacred writers are utter strangers to. It is a vain and boyish eloquence; and as it has always been esteemed below the great geniuses of all ages, so much more so, with respect to those writers who were actuated by the spirit of infinite wisdom, and therefore wrote

with that force and majesty with which never man writ. The other sort of eloquence is quite the reverse to this, and which may be said to be the true characteristic of the holy Scriptures; where the excellence does not arise from a laboured and far-fetched elocution, but from a surprising mixture of simplicity and majesty, which is a double character, so difficult to be united, that it is seldom to be met with in compositions merely human. We see nothing in holy writ of affectation and superfluous ornament. As the infinite wise Being has condescended to stoop to our language, thereby to convey to us the light of revelation, so has he been pleased graciously to accommodate it to us with the most natural and graceful plainness it would admit of. Now, it is observable that the most excellent prophane authors, whether Greek or Latin, lose most of their graces whenever we find them literally translated. Homer's famed representation of Jupiter, in his first book;—his cried-up description of a tempest—his relation of Neptune's shaking the earth, and opening it to its centre;—his description of Pallas's horses; with numbers of other long-since admired passages,—flag, and almost vanish away, in the vulgar Latin translation.

Let any one but take the pains to read the common Latin interpretation of Virgil, Theocritus, or even of Pindar, and one may venture to affirm he will be able to trace out but few remains of the graces which charmed him so much in the original. The natural conclusion from hence is, that in the

classical authors, the expression, the sweetness of the numbers, occasioned by a musical placing of words, constitute a great part of their beauties;—whereas, in the Sacred Writings, they consist more in the greatness of the things themselves, than in the words and expressions. The ideas and conceptions are so great and lofty in their own nature, that they necessarily appear magnificent in the most artless dress. Look but into the Bible, and we see them shine through the most simple and literal translations. That glorious description which Moses gives of the creation of the heavens and the earth, which Longinus, the best critic the eastern world ever produced, was so justly taken with, has not lost the least whit of its intrinsic worth; and though it has undergone so many translations, yet triumphs over all, and breaks forth with as much force and vehemence as in the original. Of this stamp are numbers of passages throughout the Scriptures;—instance, that celebrated description of a tempest in the hundred and seventh psalm; those beautiful reflections of holy Job, upon the shortness of life, and instability of human affairs, so judiciously appointed by our church in her office for the burial of the dead;—that lively description of a horse of war, in the thirty-ninth chapter of Job, in which, from the nineteenth to the twenty-sixth verse, there is scarce a word which does not merit a particular explication to display the beauties of. I might add to these, those tender and pathetic expostulations with the children of Israel, which run throughout

all the prophets, which the most uncritical reader can scarce help being affected with.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard:—What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done?—wherefore, when I expected that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes:—and yet, ye say, the way of the Lord is unequal. Here now, O house of Israel,—is not my way equal?—are not your ways unequal?—have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, and not that he should return from his ways and live?—I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; —but Israel doth not know,—my people doth not consider.—There is nothing in all the eloquence of the heathen world comparable to the vivacity and tenderness of these reproaches;—there is something in them so thoroughly affecting, and so noble and sublime withal, that one might challenge the writings of the most celebrated orators of antiquity to produce any thing like them. These observations upon the superiority of the inspired penmen to heathen ones, in that which regards the composition more conspicuously, hold good when they are considered upon the foot of historians. Not to mention that prophane histories give an account only of human achievements and temporal events, which, for the most part, are so full of uncertainty and contradictions, that we are at a loss where to seek for truth;—but that the sacred history is the

history of God himself,—the history of his omnipotence and infinite wisdom, his universal providence, his justice and mercy, and all his other attributes, displayed under a thousand different forms, by a series of the most various and wonderful events that ever happened to any nation, or language:—not to insist upon this visible superiority in sacred history,—there is yet another undoubted excellence the prophane historians seldom arrive at, which is almost the distinguishing character of the sacred ones; namely, that unaffected, artless manner of relating historical facts,—which is so entirely of a piece with every other part of the holy writings. What I mean will be best made out by a few instances. In the history of Joseph (which certainly is told with the greatest variety of beautiful and affecting circumstances), when Joseph makes himself known, and weeps aloud upon the neck of his dear brother Benjamin, that all the house of Pharaoh heard him; at that instant, none of his brethren are introduced as uttering aught, either to express their present joy, or palliate their former injuries to him. On all sides, there immediately ensues a deep and solemn silence; a silence infinitely more eloquent and expressive than any thing else could have been substituted in its place. Had Thucydides, Herodotus, Levy, or any of the celebrated classical historians, been employed in writing this history, when they came to this point, they would, doubtless, have exhausted all their fund of eloquence in furnishing Joseph's brethren with laboured and studied harangues; which, how-

ever fine they might have been in themselves, would nevertheless have been unnatural, and altogether improper on the occasion. For when such a variety of contrary passions broke in upon them, —what tongue was able to utter their hurried and distracted thoughts?—When remorse, surprise, shame, joy, and gratitude struggle together in their bosoms, how uneloquently would their lips have performed their duty?—how unfaithfully their tongues have spoken the language of their hearts? In this case, silence was truly eloquent and natural, and tears expressed what oratory was incapable of.

If ever these persons I have been addressing myself to, can be persuaded to follow the advice in the text, of searching the Scriptures,—the work of their salvation will be begun upon its true foundation. For, first, they will insensibly be led to admire the beautiful propriety of their language:—when a favorable opinion is conceived of this, next, they will more closely attend to the goodness of the moral, and the purity and soundness of the doctrines. The pleasure of reading will still be increased, by that near concern which they will find themselves to have in those many important truths, which they will see so clearly demonstrated in the Bible, that grand charter of our eternal happiness. It is the fate of mankind, too often to seem insensible of what they may enjoy at the easiest rate. What might not our neighbouring Romish countries, who groan under the yoke of popish impositions and priestcraft, what might not those poor

misguided creatures give, for the happiness which we know not how to value,—of being born in a country where a church is established by our laws, and encouraged by our princes;—which not only allows the free study of the Scriptures, but even exhorts and invites us to it;—a church that is a stranger to the tricks and artifice of having the Bible in an unknown tongue, to give the greater latitude to the designs of the clergy, in imposing their own trumpery, and foisting in whatever may best serve to aggrandize themselves, or enslave the wretches committed to their trust? In short, our religion was not given us to raise our imaginations with ornaments of words, or strokes of eloquence; but to purify our hearts, and lead us into the paths of righteousness. However, not to defend ourselves,—when the attack is principally levelled at this point,—might give occasion to our adversaries to triumph, and charge us either with negligence or inability. It is well known how willing the enemies of our religion are to seek occasions against us;—how ready to magnify every mote in our eyes to the bigness of a beam; how eager, upon the least default, to insult, and cry out,—There, there! so would we have it:—not, perhaps, that we are so much the subject of malice and aversion, but that the licentious age seems bent upon bringing christianity into discredit at any rate; and, rather than miss the aim, would strike through the sides of those that are sent to teach it. Thank God, the truth of our holy religion is established with such strong evidence, that it rests upon a founda-

tion never to be overthrown, either by the open assaults or cunning devices of wicked and designing men. The part we have to act, is to be steady, sober, and vigilant; to be ready to every good work; to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering; to give occasion of offence to no man; that, with well-doing, we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

I shall close all with that excellent collect of our church:—

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning,—grant that we may in suchwise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, by patience and comfort of thy holy word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Now to God the Father, &c.

SERMON XLIII.

PSALM XCV. 6, 7.

O come let us worship and fall down before him:—for he is the Lord our God.—

In this psalm we find holy David taken up with the pious contemplation of God's infinite power, majesty, and greatness:—he considers him as the sovereign Lord of the whole earth, the maker and supporter of all things;—that by him the heavens were created, and all the host of them; that the earth was wisely fashioned by his hands;—he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods:—that we likewise, the people of his pasture, were raised up by the same creating hand, from nothing, to the dignity of rational creatures, made with respect to our reason and understanding, after his own most perfect image.

It was natural to imagine that such a contemplation would light up a flame of devotion in any grateful man's breast; and accordingly we find it break forth in the words of the text, in a kind of religious rapture:

O come let us worship and fall down before him:—for he is the Lord our God.

Sure never exhortation to prayer and worship can be better enforced than upon this principle,—that God is the cause and creator of all things;—

that each individual being is upheld in the station it was first placed, by the same hand which first formed it;—that all the blessings and advantages, which are necessary to the happiness and welfare of beings on earth, are only to be derived from the same fountain:—and that the only way to do it, is to secure an interest in his favor, by a grateful expression of our sense for the benefits we have received, and a humble dependance upon him for those we expect and stand in want of.—Whom have we in heaven, says the Psalmist, but thee, O God, to look unto or depend on?—to whom shall we pour out our complaints, and speak of all our wants and necessities, but to thy goodness which is ever willing to confer upon us whatever becomes us to ask, and thee to grant;—because thou hast promised to be nigh unto all that call upon thee,—yea, unto all such as call upon thee faithfully;—that thou wilt fulfil the desire of them that fear thee, that thou wilt also hear their cry, and help them.

Of all duties, prayer certainly is the sweetest and most easy.—There are some duties which may seem to occasion a troublesome opposition to the natural workings of flesh and blood;—such as the forgiveness of injuries, and the love of our enemies;—others which will force us unavoidably into a perpetual struggle with our passions,—which war against the soul;—such as chastity,—temperance,—humility. There are other virtues, which seem to bid us forget our present interest for a while,—such as charity and generosity;—others that teach us to forget it at all times, and wholly to fix our af-

fections on things above, and in no circumstance to act like men that look for a continuing city here, but upon one to come, whose builder and maker is God. But this duty of prayer and thanksgiving to God—has no such oppositions to encounter;—it takes no bullock out of thy field,—no horse out of thy stable,—nor he-goat out of thy fold;—it costeth no weariness of bones, no untimely watchings;—it requireth no strength of parts, or painful study, but just to know and have a true sense of our dependance, and of the mercies by which we are upheld:—and with this, in every place and posture of body, a good man may lift up his soul unto the Lord his God.

Indeed as to the frequency of putting this duty formally in practice, as the precept must necessarily have varied according to the different stations in which God has placed us;—so he has been pleased to determine nothing precisely concerning it:—for, perhaps, it would be unreasonable to expect that the day-labourer, or he that supports a numerous family by the sweat of his brow, should spend as much of his time in devotion, as the man of leisure and unbounded wealth. This, however, in the general may hold good, that we are bound to pay this tribute to God, as often as his providence has put an opportunity into our hands of so doing;—provided that no plea, drawn from the necessary attentions to the affairs of the world, which many men's situations oblige them to, may be supposed to extend to an exemption from paying their morning and evening sacrifice to God. For it seems to be the least that can be done to answer the demand of our

duty in this point, successively to open and shut up the day in prayer and thanksgiving;—since there is not a morning thou risest, or a night thou liest down, but thou art indebted for it to the watchful providence of Almighty God.——David and Daniel, whose names are recorded in Scripture for future example:—the first, though a mighty king, embarrassed with wars abroad, and unnatural disturbances at home; a situation, one would think, would allow little time for any thing but his own and his kingdom's safety—yet found he leisure to pray *seven times* a day;—the latter, the counsellor and first minister of state to the great Nebuchadnezzar; and, though perpetually fatigued with the affairs of a mighty kingdom, and the government of the whole province of Babylon, which, was committed to his administration;—though near the person of an idolatrous king, and amidst the temptations of a luxurious court,——yet never neglected he his God; but, as we read,—he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before him.

A frequent correspondence with heaven, by prayer and devotion, is the greatest nourishment and support of spiritual life:—it keeps the sense of a God warm and lively within us,——which secures our disposition, and sets such guards over us, that hardly will a temptation prevail against us.——Who can entertain a base or an impure thought, or think of executing it, who is incessantly conversing with his God?—or not despise every temptation this lower world can offer him,

when by his constant addresses before the throne of God's majesty, he brings the glorious prospect of heaven perpetually before his eyes?

I cannot help here taking notice of the doctrine of those who would resolve all devotion into the inner man, and think that there is nothing more requisite to express our reverence to God, but purity and integrity of heart,——unaccompanied either with words or actions.—To this opinion it may be justly answered, that, in the present state we are in, we find such a strong sympathy and union between our souls and bodies, that the one cannot be touched or sensibly affected, without producing some corresponding emotion in the other.—Nature has assigned a different look, tone of voice, and gesture peculiar to every passion and affection we are subject to; and, therefore, to argue against this strict correspondence which is held between our souls and bodies,—is disputing against the frame and mechanism of human nature.—We are not angels, but men clothed with their bodies, and, in some measure, governed by our imaginations, that we have need of all these external helps which nature has made the interpreters of our thoughts.—And, no doubt, though a virtuous and a good life are more acceptable in the sight of God, than either prayer or thanksgiving;—for, behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams;—nevertheless, as the one ought to be done, so the other ought not, by any means, to be left undone.—As God is to be obeyed, —so he is to be worshipped also.—For, although

inward holiness and integrity of heart is the ultimate end of the divine dispensations;——yet external religion is a certain means of promoting it. ——Each of them has its just bounds;—and therefore as we would not be so carnal as merely to rest contented with the one,—so neither can we pretend to be so spiritual as to neglect the other.

And though God is all-wise, and therefore understands our thoughts afar off,—and knows the exact degrees of our love and reverence to him, though we should withhold those outward marks of it;—yet God himself has been graciously pleased to command us to pray to him;—that we might beg the assistance of his grace to work with us against our own infirmities;—that we might acknowledge him to be, what he is, the supreme Lord of the whole world;—that we might testify the sense we have of all his mercies and loving-kindness to us,—and confess that he has the propriety of every thing we enjoy,—that the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

Thus much of this duty of prayer in general.—From every individual it may be reasonably expected, from a bare reflection upon his own station, his personal wants, and the daily blessings which he has received in particular;—but, for those blessings bestowed upon the whole species in common,—reason seems further to require, that a joint return should be made by as many of the species as can conveniently assemble together for this religious purpose.—From hence arises, likewise, the reasonableness of public worship, and sacred places

set apart for that purpose; without which, it would be very difficult to preserve that sense of God and religion upon the minds of men, which is so necessary to their well-being, considered only as a civil society, and with regard to the purposes of this life, and the influence which a just sense of it must have upon their actions.—Besides, men who are united in societies, can have no other cement to unite them likewise in religious ties, as well as in manners of worship and points of faith, but the institution of solemn times and public places destined for that use.

And it is not to be questioned, that if the time, as well as place for serving God, were once considered as indifferent, and left so far to every man's choice as to have no calls to public prayer, however a sense of religion might be preserved awhile by a few speculative men, yet that the bulk of mankind would lose all knowledge of it, and in time live without God in the world.—Not that private prayer is the less our duty, the contrary of which is proved above; and our Saviour says, that when we pray to God in secret, we shall be rewarded openly;—but that prayers which are publicly offered up in God's house, tend more to the glory of God, and the benefit of ourselves:——for this reason, that they are presumed to be performed with greater attention and seriousness, and therefore most likely to be heard with a more favorable acceptance.—And for this one might appeal to every man's breast, whether he has not been affected with the most elevated pitch of devotion,

when he gave thanks in the great congregation of the saints, and praised God amongst much people? ——Of this united worship there is a glorious description which St. John gives us, in the Revelations, where he supposes the whole universe joining together, in their several capacities, to give glory in this manner to their common Lord.—Every creature which was in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as were in the seas, and all that were in them, heard I, crying,—Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne.

But here it may be asked, that if public worship tends so much to promote the glory of God,—and is what is so indispensably the duty and benefit of every christian state,——how came it to pass, that our blessed Saviour left no command to his followers, throughout the gospel, to set up public places of worship, and keep them sacred for that purpose?——It may be answered,—that the necessity of setting apart places for divine worship, and the holiness of them when thus set apart, seemed already to have been so well established by former revelation, as not to need any express precept upon that subject:—for though the particular appointment of the temple, and the confinement of worship to that place alone, were only temporal parts of the Jewish covenant; yet the necessity and duty of having places somewhere solemnly dedicated to God carried a moral reason with it, and therefore was not abolished with the ceremonial part of the law.—Our Saviour came not to destroy,

but to fulfil the law;—and therefore the moral precepts of it, which promoted a due regard to the divine Majesty, remained in as full force as ever. —And accordingly we find it attested, both by christian and heathen writers, that so soon as the second century, when the number of believers was much increased, and the circumstances of rich converts enabled them to do it,—that they began to erect edifices for divine worship;—and though, under the frowns and oppression of the civil power, they every Sabbath assembled themselves therein, that with one hand and one lip they might declare whose they were, and whom they served, and as the servants of one Lord, might offer up their joint prayers and petitions.

I wish there was no reason to lament an abatement of this religious zeal amongst christians of later days. —Though the piety of our forefathers seems, in a great measure, to have deprived us of the merit of building churches for the service of God, there can be no such plea for not frequenting them in a regular and solemn manner.—How often do people absent themselves (when in the utmost distress how to dispose of themselves) from church, even upon those days which are set apart for nothing else but the worship of God;—when, to trifle that day away, or apply any portion of it to secular concerns, is a sacrilege almost in the literal sense of the word.

From this duty of public prayer arises another, which I cannot help speaking of, it being so dependant upon it;—I mean a serious, devout, and

respectful behaviour, when we are performing this solemn duty in the house of God.—This is surely the least that can be necessary in the immediate presence of the Sovereign of the world, upon whose acceptance of our addresses all our present and future happiness depends.

External behaviour is the result of inward reverence, and is therefore part of our duty to God, whom we are to worship in body as well as spirit.

And as no one should be wanting in outward respect and decorum before an earthly prince or superior, much less should we be so before him, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain.

Notwithstanding the obviousness of this branch of duty,—it seems often to be little understood; —and whoever will take a general survey of church behaviour, will often meet with scenes of sad variety.—What a vein of indolence and indevotion sometimes seems to run throughout whole congregations!—what ill-timed pains do some take in putting on an air of gaiety and indifference in the most interesting parts of this duty,—even when they are making confession of their sins, as if they were ashamed to be thought serious with their God!—Surely, to address ourselves to his infinite Majesty after a negligent and dispassionate manner, besides the immediate indignity offered, it is a sad sign we little consider the blessings we ask for, and far less deserve them.—Besides, what is a prayer, unless our heart and affections go along with it?—It is not so much as the shadow of devotion: and little better than the papists telling their

beads,—or honoring God with their lips, when their hearts are far from him.—The consideration that a person is come to prostrate himself before the throne of high heaven, and in that place which is particularly distinguished by his presence, is sufficient inducement for any one to watch over his imagination, and guard against the least appearance of levity and disrespect.

An inward sincerity will of course influence the outward deportment; but where the one is wanting, there is great reason to suspect the absence of the other.—I own it is possible, and often happens, that this eternal garb of religion may be worn, when there is little within of a piece with it;—but I believe the converse of the proposition can never happen to be true, that a truly religious frame of mind should exist without some outward mark of it.—The mind will shine through the veil of flesh which covers it, and naturally express its religious dispositions;—and, if it possesses the power of godliness,—will have the external form of it too.

May God grant us to be defective in neither,—but that we may so praise and magnify God on earth,—that when he cometh at the last day, with ten thousand of his saints in heaven, to judge the world, we may be partakers of their eternal inheritance. Amen.

SERMON XLIV.

THE WAYS OF PROVIDENCE JUSTIFIED TO MAN.

PSALM LXXIII. 12, 13.

Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world, they increase in riches.

Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

THIS complaint of the Psalmist's concerning the promiscuous distribution of God's blessings to the just and unjust,—that the sun should shine without distinction upon the good and the bad, —and rains descend upon the righteous and unrighteous man, is a subject that has afforded much matter for inquiry, and at one time or other has raised doubts to dishearten and perplex the minds of men. If the sovereign Lord of all the earth does look on, whence so much disorder in the face of things?—why is it permitted, that wise and good men should be left often a prey to so many miseries and distresses of life, —whilst the guilty and foolish triumph in their offences, and even the tabernacles of robbers prosper?

To this it is answered,—that therefore there is a future state of rewards and punishments to take place after this life, wherein all these inequalities shall be made even, where the circumstances of

every man's case shall be considered, and where God shall be justified in all his ways, and every mouth shall be stopt.

If this was not so,—if the ungodly were to prosper in the world, and have riches in possession,—and no distinction to be made hereafter,—to what purpose would it have been to have maintained our integrity?—Lo! then, indeed, should I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

It is farther said, and what is a more direct answer to the point,—that when God created man, that he might make him capable of receiving happiness at his hands hereafter,—he endowed him with liberty and freedom of choice, without which he could not have been a creature accountable for his actions;—that it is merely from the bad use he makes of these gifts,—that all those instances of irregularity do result, upon which the complaint is here grounded,—which could no ways be prevented, but by the total subversion of human liberty;—that should God make bare his arm, and interpose in every injustice that is committed,—mankind might be said to do what was right,—but, at the same time, to lose the merit of it, since they would act under force and necessity, and not from the determinations of their own mind;—that upon this supposition,—a man could with no more reason expect to go to heaven for acts of temperance, justice, and humanity, than for the ordinary impulses of hunger and thirst, which nature directed;—that God has dealt with man upon

better terms;—he has first endowed him with liberty and free-will;—he has set life and death, good and evil before him;—that he has given him faculties to find out what will be the consequences of either way of acting, and then left him to take which course his reason and direction shall point out.

I shall desist from enlarging any further upon either of the foregoing arguments in vindication of God's providence, which are urged so often with so much force and conviction, as to leave no room for a reasonable reply;—since the miseries which befal the good, and the seeming happiness of the wicked, could not be otherwise in such a free state and condition as this in which we are placed.

In all charges of this kind we generally take two things for granted;—1st, That in the instances we give, we know certainly the good from the bad;—and, 2dly, The respective state of their enjoyments or sufferings.

I shall therefore, in the remaining part of my discourse, take up your time with a short inquiry into the difficulties of coming not only at the true characters of men,——but likewise of knowing either the degrees of their real happiness or misery in this life.

The first of these will teach us candour in our judgment of others:—the second, to which I shall confine myself, will teach us humility in our reasonings upon the ways of God.

For though the miseries of the good, and the prosperity of the wicked, are not in general to be

denied;—yet I shall endeavour to shew, that the particular instances we are apt to produce, when we cry out in the words of the Psalmist, Lo! these are the ungodly,—these prosper, and are happy in the world:—I say, I shall endeavour to shew, that we are so ignorant of the articles of the charge,—and the evidence we go upon to make them good is so lame and defective,—as to be sufficient by itself to check all propensity to expostulate with God's providence, allowing there was no other way of clearing up the matter reconcileably to his attributes.

And, first,—what certain and infallible marks have we of the goodness or badness of the bulk of mankind?

If we trust to fame and reports,—if they are good, how do we know but they may proceed from partial friendship or flattery?——when bad, from envy or malice, from ill-natured surmises and construction of things?—and, on both sides, from small matters aggrandized through mistake,—and sometimes through the unskilful relation of even truth itself?—From some, or all of which causes, it happens, that the characters of men, like the histories of the Egyptians, are to be received and read with caution;—they are generally dressed out and disfigured with so many dreams and fables, that every ordinary reader shall not be able to distinguish truth from falsehood.—But allowing these reflections to be too severe in this matter,—that no such thing as envy ever lessened a man's character, or malice blackened it;—yet the characters of men

are not easily penetrated, as they depend often upon the retired, unseen parts of a man's life.—The best and truest piety is most secret, and the worst of actions, for different reasons, will be so too.—Some men are modest, and seem to take pains to hide their virtues; and from a natural distance and reserve in their tempers, scarce suffer their good qualities to be known:—others, on the contrary, put in practice a thousand little arts to counterfeit virtues which they have not, the better to conceal those vices which they really have;—and this under fair shows of sanctity, good-nature, generosity, or some virtue or other,—too specious to be seen through,—too amiable and disinterested to be suspected. These hints may be sufficient to shew how hard it is to come at the matter of fact:—but one may go a step further,—and say, that even that, in many cases, could we come to the knowledge of it, it is not sufficient by itself to pronounce a man either good or bad. There are numbers of circumstances, which attend every action of a man's life, which can never come to the knowledge of the world,—yet ought to be known, and well weighed, before sentence with any justice can be passed upon him. A man may have different views, and a different sense of things from what his judges have; and what he understands and feels, and what passes within him, may be a secret treasured up deeply there for ever. A man, through bodily infirmity, or some complexional defect, which perhaps is not in his power to correct,—may be subject to inadvertencies,—to

starts and unhappy turns of temper; he may lay open to snares he is not always aware of, or, through ignorance and want of information and proper helps, he may labour in the dark;—in all which cases he may do many things which are wrong in themselves, and yet be innocent;—at least an object rather to be pitied than censured with severity and ill-will.—These are difficulties which stand in every one's way in the forming a judgment of the characters of others.—But, for once, let us suppose them all to be got over, so that we could see the bottom of every man's heart;—let us allow that the word rogue or honest man was wrote so legibly in every man's face, that no one could possibly mistake it;—yet still the happiness of both the one and the other, which is the only fact that can bring the charge home, is what we have so little certain knowledge of,—that, bating some flagrant instances, whenever we venture to pronounce upon it, our decisions are little more than random guesses.—For who can search the heart of man?——it is treacherous even to ourselves, and much more likely to impose upon others.—Even in laughter, (if you will believe Solomon) the heart is sorrowful:——"the mind sits "drooping, whilst the countenance is gay"—and even he, who is the object of envy to those who look no further than the surface of his estate,—may appear at the same time worthy of compassion to those who know his private recesses. Besides this, a man's unhappiness is not to be ascertained so much from what is known to have befallen him,

——as from his particular turn and cast of mind, and capacity of bearing it.——Poverty, exile, loss of fame or friends, the death of children, the dearest of all pledges of a man's happiness, make not equal impressions upon every temper.—You will see one man undergo, with scarce the expence of a sigh,—what another, in the bitterness of his soul, would go mourning for all his life long:—nay, a hasty word, or an unkind look, to a soft and tender nature, will strike deeper than a sword to the hardened and senseless. If these reflections hold true with regard to misfortunes,—they are the same with regard to enjoyments:—we are formed differently,—have different tastes and perceptions of things;—by the force of habit, education, or a particular cast of mind,—it happens that neither the use or possession of the same enjoyments and advantages produce the same happiness and contentment;—but that it differs in every man almost according to his temper and complexion:—so that the self-same happy accidents in life, which shall give raptures to the choleric or sanguine man, shall be received with indifference by the cold and phlegmatic;—and so oddly perplexed are the accounts of both human happiness and misery in this world,—that trifles, light as air, shall be able to make the hearts of some men sing for joy;—at the same time that others, with real blessings and advantages, without the power of using them, have their hearts heavy and discontented.

Alas! if the principles of contentment are not within us, the height of station and worldly gran-

deur will as soon add a cubit to a man's stature as to his happiness.

This will suggest to us how little a way we have gone towards the proof of any man's happiness,—
—in barely saying,—Lo! this man prospers in the world,—and this man has riches in possession.

When a man has got much above us, we take it for granted,—that he sees some glorious prospects, and feels some mighty pleasures from his height;—whereas could we get up to him, it is great odds whether we should find any thing to make us tolerable amends for the pains and trouble of climbing up so high.—Nothing, perhaps, but more dangers and more troubles still:—and such a giddiness of head besides, as to make a wise man wish he was well down again upon the level.—To calculate, therefore, the happiness of mankind by their stations and honors, is the most deceitful of all rules;—great, no doubt, is the happiness which a moderate fortune and moderate desires, with a consciousness of virtue, will secure a man.—Many are the silent pleasures of the honest peasant, who rises cheerfully to his labour:—look into his dwelling,—where the scene of every man's happiness chiefly lies;—he has the same domestic endearments,—as much joy and comfort in his children,—and as flattering hopes of their doing well,—to enliven his hours and glad his heart, as you could conceive in the most affluent station.—And I make no doubt, in general, but if the true account of his joys and sufferings were to be balanced with those of his betters,—that the upshot

would prove to be little more than this,—that the rich man had the more meat,—but the poor man the better stomach;—the one had more luxury,—more able physicians to attend and set him to rights;—the other, more health and soundness in his bones, and less occasion for their help; that, after these two articles betwixt them were balanced, —in all other things they stood upon a level:—that the sun shines as warm,—the air blows as fresh, and the earth breathes as fragrant, upon the one as the other;—and that they have an equal share in all the beauties and real benefits of nature. —These hints may be sufficient to shew what I proposed from them,—the difficulties which attend us in judging truly either of the happiness or the misery of the bulk of mankind,—the evidence being still more defective in this case (as the matter of fact is hard to come at)—than even in that of judging of their true characters; of both which, in general, we have such imperfect knowledge, as will teach us candour in our determinations upon each other.

But the main purport of this discourse, is, to teach us humility in our reasonings upon the ways of the Almighty.

That things are dealt unequally in this world, is one of the strongest natural arguments for a future state,—and therefore is not to be overthrown: nevertheless,—I am persuaded the charge is far from being as great as at first sight it may appear; —or if it is,—that our views of things are so nar-

row and confined, that it is not in our power to make it good.

But suppose it otherwise,—that the happiness and prosperity of bad men were as great as our general complaints make them,—and, what is not the case,—that we were not able to clear up the matter, or answer it reconcileably with God's justice and providence,—what shall we infer?—Why, the most becoming conclusion is,—that it is one instance more, out of many others, of our ignorance:—why should this, or any other religious difficulty he cannot comprehend,—why should it alarm him more than ten thousand other difficulties which every day elude his most exact and attentive search?—Does not the meanest flower in the field, or the smallest blade of grass, baffle the understanding of the most penetrating mind?—Can the deepest inquiries after nature tell us, upon what particular size and motion of parts the various colours and tastes of vegetables depend;—why one shrub is laxative,—another astringent;—why arsenic or hellebore should lay waste this noble frame of ours,—or opium lock up all the inroads to our senses, and plunder us, in so merciless a manner, of reason and understanding?—Nay, have not the most obvious things that come in our way, dark sides, which the quickest sight cannot penetrate into; and do not the clearest and most exalted understandings find themselves puzzled, and at a loss in every particle of matter?

Go then,—proud man!—and when thy head

turns giddy with opinions of thy own wisdom, that thou wouldst correct the measures of the Almighty,—go then,—take a full view of thyself in this glass:—consider thy own faculties, how narrow and imperfect;—how much they are chequered with truth and falsehood;—how little arrives at thy knowledge, and how darkly and confusedly thou discernest even that little as in a glass:—consider the beginnings and endings of things, the greatest and the smallest, how they all conspire to baffle thee;—and which way ever thou prosecutest thy inquiries,—what fresh subjects of amazement,—and what fresh reasons to believe there are more yet behind which thou canst never comprehend.—Consider,—these are but part of his ways:—how little a portion is heard of him!—Canst thou, by searching, find out God?—wouldst thou know the Almighty to perfection?—'Tis as high as heaven, what canst thou do?—'tis deeper than hell, how canst thou know it?

Could we but see the mysterious workings of Providence, and were we able to comprehend the whole plan of his infinite wisdom and goodness, which possibly may be the case in the final consummation of all things:—those events, which we are now so perplexed to account for, would probably exalt and magnify his wisdom, and make us cry out with the Apostle, in that rapturous exclamation,—O! the depth of the riches both of the goodness and wisdom of God!—how unsearchable are his ways, and his paths past finding out!

Now to God, &c.

SERMON XLV.

THE INGRATITUDE OF ISRAEL.

2 KINGS, XVII. 7.

For so it was,—that the childen of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt.—

THE words of the text account for the cause of a sad calamity, which is related, in the foregoing verses, to have befallen a great number of Israelites, who were surprised in the capital city of Samaria, by Hosea, king of Assyria, and cruelly carried away by him out of their own country, and placed on the desolate frontiers of Halah, and in Haber, by the river Gozan, and in the city of the Medes, and there confined to end their days in sorrow and captivity.—Upon which the sacred historian, instead of accounting for so sad an event merely from political springs and causes; such for instance, as the superior strength and policy of the enemy,—or an unseasonable provocation given,—or that proper measures of defence were neglected; he traces it up, in one word, to its true cause:—For so it was, says he, that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt.—It was surely a sufficient foundation to dread some evil,—that they had sinned against that Being who

had an unquestionable right to their obedience.—But what an aggravation was it—that they had not only sinned simply against the truth, but against the God of mercies, who had brought them forth out of the land of Egypt;—who not only created, upheld, and favored them with so many advantages in common with the rest of their fellow-creatures, but who had been particularly kind to them in their misfortunes;—who, when they were in the house of bondage, in the most hopeless condition, without a prospect of any natural means of redress, had compassionately heard their cry, and took pity upon the afflictions of a distressed people,—and by a chain of miracles, delivered them from servitude and oppression:—miracles of so stupendous a nature, that I take delight to offer them, as often as I have an opportunity, to your devoutest contemplations.—This, you would think as high and as complicated an aggravation of their sins as could be urged.—This was not all;—for besides God's goodness in first favoring their miraculous escape, a series of successes, not to be accounted for from second causes and the natural course of events, had crowned their heads in so remarkable a manner, as to afford an evident proof, not only of his general concern for their welfare, but of his particular providence and attachment to them above all people upon earth. In the wilderness he led them like sheep, and kept them as the apple of his eye:—he suffered no man to do them wrong, but reproved even kings for their sake.—When they entered

into the promised land,—no force was able to stand before them;—when in possession of it,—no army was able to drive them out;—and, in a word, nature, for a time, was driven backwards to serve them, and even the Sun itself had stood still in the midst of heaven to secure their victories.

A people with so many testimonies of God's favor, who had not profited thereby, so as to become a virtuous people, must have been utterly corrupt;—and so they were.—And it is likely from the many specimens they had given, in Moses's time, of a disposition to forget God's benefits, and upon every trial to rebel against him, —he foresaw they would certainly prove a thankless and unthinking people, extremely inclined to go astray and do evil;—and therefore, if any thing was likely to bring them back to themselves, and to consider the evils of their misdoings,—it must be the dread of some temporal calamity, which he prophetically threatened, would one day or other befal them:—hoping, no doubt,—that if no principle of gratitude could make them an obedient people,—at least they might be wrought upon by the terror of being reduced back again by the same all-powerful hand to their first distressed condition:—which, in the end, did actually overtake them. — For at length, when neither the alternatives of promises or threatenings,—when neither rewards or corrections,—comforts or afflictions, could soften them:—when continual instructions,—warnings,—invitations;—reproofs,—miracles,—prophets and holy

guides, had no effect, but, instead of making them grow better, apparently made them grow worse,—God's patience at length withdrew,—and he suffered them to reap the wages of their folly, by letting them fall into the state of bondage from whence he had first raised them;—and that not only in that partial instance of those in Samaria, who were taken by Hosea,—but, I mean, in that more general instance of their overthrow by the army of the Chaldeans;—wherein he suffered the whole nation to be led away, and carried captive into Nineveh and Babylon.—We may be assured that the history of God Almighty's just dealings with this froward and thoughtless people—was not wrote for nothing;—but that it was given as a loud call and warning of obedience and gratitude, for all races of men to whom the light of revelation should hereafter reach;—and therefore I have made choice of this subject, as it seems likely to furnish some reflections seasonable for the beginning of this week,—which should be devoted to such meditations as may prepare and fit us for the solemn fast which we are shortly to observe, and whose pious intention will not be answered by a bare assembling ourselves together, without making some religious and national remarks suitable to the occasion.—Doubtless, there is no nation which ever had so many extraordinary reasons and supernatural motives to become thankful and virtuous as the Jews had:—which, besides the daily blessings of God's providence to them, has not received sufficient blessings

and mercies at the hand of God, so as to engage their best services, and the warmest returns of gratitude they can pay.

There has been a time, may be, when they have been delivered from some grievous calamity,—from the rage of pestilence or famine,—from the edge and fury of the sword,—from the fate and fall of kingdoms round them:—they may have been preserved by providential discoveries of plots and designs against the well-being of their states, or by critical turns and revolutions in their favor, when beginning to sink.—By some signal interposition of God's providence, they may have rescued their liberties, and all that was dear to them, from the jaws of some tyrant;—or may have preserved their religion pure and uncorrupted, when all other comforts failed them.—If other countries have reason to be thankful to God for any one of these mercies,—much more has this of ours,—which, at one time or other, has received them all;—insomuch that our history, for this last hundred years, has scarce been any thing but the history of our deliverances and God's blessings;—and these in so complicated a chain, such as were scarce ever vouchsafed to any people besides, except the Jews;—and with regard to them, though inferior in the stupendous manner of their working,—yet no way so—in the extensive goodness of their effects, and the infinite benevolence and power which must have wrought them for us.

Here then let us stop to look back a moment,

and inquire what great effects all this has had upon our sins, and how far worthy we have lived of what we have received.

A stranger, when he heard that this island had been so favored by heaven,—so happy in our laws and religion,—so flourishing in our trade,—and so blessed in our situation,—and so visibly protected in all of them by providence,—would conclude, that our morals had kept pace with these blessings, and would expect that, as we were the most favored by God Almighty, we must be the most virtuous and religious people upon earth.

Would to God, there was any other reason to incline one to such a belief!—would to God, that the appearance of religion was more frequent! for that would necessarily imply the reality of it somewhere, and most probably in the greatest and most respectable characters of the nation. Such was the situation of this country, till a licentious king introduced a licentious age. The court of Charles the Second first brake in upon, and I fear has almost demolished, the out-works of religion, of modesty, and of sober manners,—so that, instead of any real marks of religion amongst us, you see thousands who are tired with carrying the mask of it,—and have thrown it aside as a useless incumbrance.

But this licentiousness, he'll say, may be chiefly owing to a long course of prosperity, which is apt to corrupt men's mind. God has since tried you with afflictions;—you have had lately a bloody

and expensive war;—God has sent, moreover, a pestilence amongst your cattle, which has cut off the flock from the fold, and left no herd in the stalls;—besides,—you have just felt two dreadful shocks in your metropolis of a most terrifying nature—which, if God's providence had not checked and restrained within some bounds, might have overthrown your capital, and your kingdom with it,

Surely, he'll say,—all these warnings must have awakened the consciences of the most unthinking part of you, and forced the inhabitants of your land, from such admonitions, to have learned righteousness. I own, this is the natural effect, and, one should hope, should always be the improvement from such calamities;—for we often find, that numbers of people, who in their prosperity seemed to forget God—do yet remember him in the days of trouble and distress;—yet, consider this nationally, we see no such effect from it, as in fact one would expect from speculation.

For instance, with all the devastation and bloodshed which the war has occasioned,—how many converts has it made either to virtue or frugality?—The pestilence amongst our cattle, though it has distressed, and utterly undone, so many thousands; yet what one visible alteration has it made in the course of our lives?

And though one would imagine that the necessary drains of taxes for the one, and the loss of rent and property for the other,—should, in some measure, have withdrawn the means of gratifying our passions as we have done;—yet what appear-

ance is there amongst us that it is so;—what one fashionable folly or extravagance has been checked? —Are not the same expences of equipage, and furniture, and dress,—the same order of diversions, perpetually returning, and as great luxury and epicurism of entertainments, as in the most prosperous condition? So that, though the head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, we all affect to look well in the face, either as if nothing had happened, or we were ashamed to acknowledge the force and natural effects of the chastisements of God. And if, from the effects which war and pestilence have had, we may form a judgmant of the moral effects which this last terror is likely to produce, it is to be feared, however we might be startled at first,—that the impressions will scarce last longer than the instantaneous shock which occasioned them:—And I make no doubt, should a man have courage to declare his opinion,—"That he believed it was "an indication of God's anger upon a corrupt ge-"neration,"—that it would be great odds but he would be pitied for his weakness, or openly laughed at for his superstition. Or if, after such a declaration,—he was thought worth setting right in his mistakes,—he would be informed,—that religion had nothing to do in explications of this kind;—that all such violent vibrations of the earth were owing to subterraneous caverns falling down of themselves, or being blown up by nitrous, and sulphureous vapours rarified by heat;—and that it was idle to bring in the Deity to unravel the knot, when it can be resolved easily into natural causes. Vain

unthink mortals!—As if natural causes were any thing else in the hands of God,—but instruments which he can turn to work the purposes of his will, either to reward or punish, as seems fitting to his infinite wisdom.

Thus no man repenteth him of his wickedness, saying,—What have I done?—but every one turneth to his course, as a horse rusheth into the battle.—To conclude, however we may underrate it now, it is a maxim of eternal truth,—which both reasonings and all accounts from history confirm,—that the wickedness and corruption of a people will sooner or later always bring on temporal mischiefs and calamities. And can it be otherwise?—for a vicious nation not only carries the seeds of destruction within, from the natural workings and course of things,—but it lays itself open to the whole force and injury of accidents from without;—and I do venture to say,—there never was a nation or people fallen into troubles or decay,—but one might justly leave the same remark upon them which the sacred historian makes in the text upon the misfortunes of the Israelites,—for so it was,—that they had sinned against the Lord their God.

Let us therefore constantly bear in mind that conclusion of the sacred writer, which I shall give you in his own beautiful and awful language:

"But the Lord, who brought you up out of the "land of Egypt, with great power and a stretch'd-"out arm: him shall ye fear, and him shall ye "worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice:—

" And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the
" commandments he wrote for you, ye shall ob-
" serve to do for evermore.—The Lord your God
" ye shall fear, and he shall deliver you out of the
" hands of all your enemies."

Now to God the Father, &c.

LETTERS

BY

LAURENCE STERNE, A. M.

TO

DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

WHEN I was asked to whom I should dedicate these volumes, I carelessly answered, to no one.—Why not? (replied the person who put the question to me.) Because most Dedications look like begging a protection to the book. Perhaps a worse interpretation may be given to it. No, no! already so much obliged, I cannot, will not, put another tax upon the generosity of any friend of Mr. Sterne's, or mine. I went home to my lodgings, and gratitude warmed my heart to such a pitch, that I vowed they should be dedicated to the man my father so much admired—who, with an unprejudiced eye, read, and approved his works, and moreover loved the man.—'Tis to Mr. Garrick, then, that I dedicate these Genuine Letters.

Can I forget the sweet Epitaph* which proved Mr. Garrick's friendship and opinion of him? 'Twas a tribute to friendship—and as a tribute of my gratitude I dedicate these volumes to a man

* Shall Pride a heap of sculptur'd marble raise,
Some worthless, unmourn'd, titled fool to praise;
And shall we not by one poor grave-stone learn
Where Genius, Wit, and Humour, sleep with *Sterne?*
D. G.

of understanding and feeling.—Receive this, as it is meant.—May you, dear Sir, approve of these Letters, as much as Mr. Sterne admired you—but Mr. Garrick, with all his urbanity, can never carry the point half so far, for Mr. Sterne was an enthusiast, if it is possible to be one, in favor of Mr. Garrick.

This may appear a very simple Dedication, but Mr. Garrick will judge by his own sensibility, that I can feel more than I can express, and I believe he will give me credit for all my grateful acknowledgments.

I am, with every sentiment of gratitude and esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged

humble Servant,

LYDIA STERNE DE MEDALLE.

LONDON,
June, 1775.

PREFACE.

In publishing these Letters, the Editor does but comply with her mother's request, which was, that if any Letters were published under Mr. Sterne's name, those she had in her possession (as well as those that her father's friends would be kind enough to send her) should be likewise published.—She depends much on the candour of the Public for the favorable reception of them,—their being genuine,* she thinks and hopes, will render them not unacceptable.—She has already experienced much benevolence and generosity from her late father's friends—the remembrance of which will ever warm her heart with gratitude!

* Besides the Letters printed by Mrs. Medalle, those written by Mr. Sterne to Eliza, and a few others, are added to the present Edition.

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LETTER I.*

TO MISS L——.

YES! I will steal from the world, and not a babbling tongue shall tell where I am—Echo shall not so much as whisper my hiding-place—suffer thy imagination to paint it as a little sun-gilt cottage, on the side of a romantic hill—dost thou think I will leave love and friendship behind me? No! they shall be my companions in solitude, for they will sit down and rise up with me in the amiable form of my L——. We will be as merry and as innocent as our first parents in Paradise, before the arch-fiend entered that undescribable scene.

The kindest affections will have room to shoot and expand in our retirement, and produce such fruit as madness, and envy, and ambition, have always killed in the bud.—Let the human tempest and hurricane rage at a distance, the desolation is beyond the horizon of peace.—My L. has seen a polyanthus blow in December—some friendly wall has sheltered it from the biting wind. —No planetary influence shall reach us, but that which presides and cherishes the sweetest flowers.

* This, and the three subsequent letters, were written by Mr. Sterne to his wife, while she resided in Staffordshire, before their marriage.

God preserve us! how delightful this prospect in idea! We will build and we will plant in our own way—simplicity shall not be tortured by art—we will learn of nature how to live—she shall be our alchymist to mingle all the good of life into one salubrious draught.—The gloomy family of care and distrust shall be banished from our dwelling, guarded by thy kind and tutelar deity—we will sing our choral songs of gratitude, and rejoice to the end of our pilgrimage.

Adieu, my L. Return to one who languishes for thy society. L. STERNE.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

You bid me tell you, my dear L. how I bore your departure for S——, and whether the valley where D'Estella stands, retains still its looks—or, if I think the roses or jessamines smell as sweet, as when you left it.—Alas! every thing has now lost its relish and look! The hour you left D'Estella, I took to my bed.—I was worn out with fevers of all kinds, but most by that fever of the heart with which thou knowest well I have been wasting these two years—and shall continue wasting till you quit S——. The good Miss S——, from the forebodings of the best of hearts, thinking I was ill, insisted upon my going to her.—What can be the cause, my dear L., that I never have

been able to see the face of this mutual friend, but I feel myself rent to pieces? She made me stay an hour with her, and in that short space, I burst into tears a dozen different times—and in such affectionate gusts of passion, that she was constrained to leave the room,—and sympathize in her dressing-room.—I have been weeping for you both, said she, in a tone of the sweetest pity—for poor L.'s heart, I have long known it—her anguish is as sharp as yours, her heart as tender—her constancy as great—her virtues as heroic—Heaven brought you not together to be tormented. I could only answer her with a kind look, and a heavy sigh—and returned home to your lodgings (which I have hired till your return) to resign myself to misery.—Fanny had prepared me a supper—she is all attention to me—but I sat over it with tears; a bitter sauce, my L., but I could eat it with no other—for the moment she began to spread my little table, my heart fainted within me.—One solitary plate, one knife, one fork, one glass!—I gave a thousand pensive penetrating looks at the chair thou hadst so often graced, in those quiet and sentimental repasts—then laid down my knife and fork, and took out my handkerchief, and clapped it across my face, and wept like a child.—I do so this very moment, my L.; for, as I take up my pen, my poor pulse quickens, my pale face glows, and tears are trickling down upon the paper, as I trace the word L——. O thou! blessed in thyself, and in thy virtues—blessed to all that know thee—to me most so, because more do I know of thee than all thy

sex.—This is the philtre, my L.; by which thou hast charmed me, and by which thou wilt hold me, thine, whilst virtue and faith hold this world together.—This, my friend, is the plain and simple magic, by which I told Miss —— I have won a place in that heart of thine, on which I depend so satisfied, that time or distance, or change of every thing which might alarm the hearts of little men, create no uneasy suspense in mine.—Wast thou to stay in S—— these seven years, thy friend, though he would grieve, scorns to doubt, or to be doubted—'tis the only exception where security is not the parent of danger.—I told you poor Fanny was all attention to me since your departure—contrives every day bringing in the name of L. She told me last night (upon giving me some hartshorn), she had observed my illness began the very day of your departure for S——; that I had never held up my head, had seldom, or scarce ever smiled, had fled from all society—that she verily believed I was broken-hearted, for she had never entered the room, or passed by the door, but she heard me sigh heavily—that I neither eat, or slept, or took pleasure in any thing as before;—judge then, my L., can the valley look so well—or the roses and jessamines smell so sweet as heretofore? Ah, me! —but adieu—the vesper bell calls me from thee to my God!

L. STERNE.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

BEFORE now, my L. has lodged an indictment against me in the high court of Friendship—I plead guilty to the charge, and entirely submit to the mercy of that amiable tribunal.—Let this mitigate my punishment, if it will not expiate my transgression—do not say that I shall offend again in the same manner, though a too easy pardon sometimes occasions a repetition of the same fault.—A Miser says, though I do no good with my money to-day, to-morrow shall be marked with some deed of beneficence.—The Libertine says, let me enjoy this week in forbidden and luxurious pleasures, and the next I will dedicate to serious thought and reflection.—The Gamester says, let me have one more chance with the dice, and I will never touch them more.—The Knave of every profession wishes to obtain but independency, and he will become an honest man.—The female Coquette triumphs in tormenting her inamorato, for fear, after marriage, he should not pity her.

The apparition of the fifth instant (for letters may almost be called so) proved more welcome, as I did not expect it. Oh! my L. thou art kind, indeed, to make an apology for me, and thou never wilt assuredly repent of one act of kindness—for being thy debtor, I will pay thee with interest.

—Why does my L. complain of the desertion of friends?—Where does the human being live that will not join in this complaint?—It is a common observation, and perhaps too true, that married people seldom extend their regards beyond their own fire-side.—There is such a thing as parsimony in esteem, as well as money—yet as one costs nothing, it might be bestowed with more liberality. We cannot gather grapes from thorns, so we must not expect kind attachments from persons who are wholly folded up in selfish schemes. I do not know whether I most despise, or pity such characters—nature never made an unkind creature—ill-usage, and bad habits, have deformed a fair and lovely creation.

My L.!—thou art surrounded by all the melancholy gloom of winter! wert thou alone, the retirement would be agreeable.——Disappointed ambition might envy such a retreat, and disappointed love would seek it out.—Crowded towns, and busy societies, may delight the unthinking and the gay—but solitude is the best nurse of wisdom. —Methinks I see my contemplative girl now in the garden, watching the gradual approaches of spring.—Dost not thou mark with delight the first vernal buds? the snow-drop, and primrose, these early and welcome visitors, spring beneath thy feet.—Flora and Pomona already consider thee as their handmaid; and in a little time will load thee with their sweetest blessing.—The feathered race are all thy own, and with them, untaught harmony will soon begin to cheer thy morning and evening

walks.—Sweet as this may be, return—return—the birds of Yorkshire will tune their pipes, and sing as melodiously as those of Staffordshire.

Adieu, my beloved L. thine too much for my *peace*.

L. STERNE.

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

I HAVE offended her whom I so tenderly love! —what could tempt me to it! but if a beggar was to knock at thy gate, wouldst thou not open the door and be melted with compassion?—I know thou wouldst, for Pity has erected a temple in thy bosom.—Sweetest, and best of all human passions! let thy web of tenderness cover the pensive form of affliction, and soften the darkest shades of misery!—I have re-considered this apology, and, alas! what will it accomplish? Arguments, however finely spun, can never change the nature of things—very true—so a truce with them.

I have lost a very valuable friend by a sad accident, and what is worse, he has left a widow and five young children to lament this sudden stroke. —If real usefulness and integrity of heart could have secured him from this, his friends would not now be mourning his untimely fate—These dark and seemingly cruel dispensations of Providence,

often make the best of human hearts complain.—Who can paint the distress of an affectionate mother, made a widow in a moment, weeping in bitterness over a numerous, helpless, and fatherless offspring!—God! these are thy chastisements, and require (hard task!) a pious acquiescence.

Forgive me this digression, and allow me to drop a tear over a departed friend; and, what is more excellent, an honest man. My L.!, thou wilt feel all that kindness can inspire in the death of ——. The event was sudden, and thy gentle spirit would be more alarmed on that account.—But, my L., thou hast less to lament, as old age was creeping on, and her period of doing good, and being useful, was nearly over.—At sixty years of age the tenement gets fast out of repair, and the lodger with anxiety thinks of a discharge.—In such a situation, the poet might well say,

"The soul uneasy," &c.

My L. talks of leaving the country—may a kind angel guide thy steps hither!—Solitude at length grows tiresome.—Thou sayest thou wilt quit the place with regret—I think so too.—Does not something uneasy mingle with the very reflection of leaving it? It is like parting with an old friend, whose temper and company one has long been acquainted with—I think I see you looking twenty times a day at the house—almost counting every brick and pane of glass, and telling them at the same time with a sigh, you are going to leave them.—Oh, happy modification of matter! they will remain

insensible of thy loss.—But how wilt thou be able to part with thy garden?—The recollection of so many pleasing walks must have endeared it to you. The trees, the shrubs, the flowers, which thou reared with thy own hands—will they not droop and fade away sooner upon thy departure?—Who will be thy successor to nurse them in thy absence?—Thou wilt leave thy name upon the myrtle-tree.—If trees, and shrubs, and flowers, could compose an elegy, I should expect a very plaintive one upon this subject.

Adieu, adieu! Believe me, ever, ever thine,

L. STERNE.

LETTER V.

TO MRS. F——.

DEAR MADAM, York, Tuesday, Nov. 19, 1759.

YOUR kind inquiries after my health, deserve my best thanks.—What can give one more pleasure than the good wishes of those we value?—I am sorry you give so bad an account of your own health, but hope you will find benefit from tar-water—it has been of infinite service to me.—I suppose, my good lady, by what you say in your letter, "that I am busy writing an extraordinary book," that your intelligence comes from York—the fountain-head of all chit-chat news—and—no matter.—Now for your desire of knowing the reason of my turning author? why truly I am

tired of employing my brains for other people's advantage.—'Tis a foolish sacrifice I have made for some years to an ungrateful person.—I depend much upon the candour of the public, but I shall not pick out a jury to try the merit of my book amongst ********, and—till you read my Tristram, do not, like some people, condemn it.—Laugh I am sure you will at some passages.—I have hired a small house in the Minster Yard for my wife and daughter—the latter is to begin dancing, &c. if I cannot leave her a fortune, I will at least give her an education.——As I shall publish my works very soon, I shall be in town by March, and shall have the pleasure of meeting with you.——All your friends are well, and ever hold you in the same estimation that your sincere friend does.

Adieu, dear lady, believe me, with every wish for your happiness, your most faithful, &c.

LAURENCE STERNE.

LETTER VI.

TO DR. ******.

DEAR SIR, Jan. 30, 1760.

—*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, is a maxim which you have so often of late urged in conversation, and in your letters (but in your last especially), with such seriousness, and severity against me, as the supposed transgressor of the rule;—that you have made me at length as serious and severe as

yourself:—but that the humours you have stirred up might not work too potently within me, I have waited four days to cool myself, before I would set pen to paper to answer you, "*de mortuis nil nisi bonum.*" I declare I have considered the wisdom and foundation of it over and over again, as dispassionately and charitably as a good Christian can, and, after all, I can find nothing in it, or make more of it than a nonsensical lullaby of some nurse, put into Latin by some pedant, to be chanted by some hypocrite to the end of the world, for the consolation of departing lechers.—'Tis, I own, Latin; and I think that is all the weight it has—for, in plain English, 'tis a loose and futile position below a dispute—"*you are not to speak "any thing of the dead but what is good.*" Why so?—Who says so?—neither reason nor scripture.—Inspired authors have done otherwise—and reason and common sense tell me, that if the characters of past ages and men are to be drawn at all, they are to be drawn like themselves; that is, with their excellencies, and with their foibles—and it is as much a piece of justice to the world, and to virtue too, to do the one, as the other.—The ruling passion, *et les egaremens du cœur*, are the very things which mark and distinguish a man's character;—in which I would as soon leave out a man's head as his hobby-horse.—However, if like the poor devil of a painter, we must conform to this pious canon, *de mortuis*, &c. which I own has a spice of piety in the *sound* of it, and be obliged to paint both our angels and our devils out of the same pot—I

then infer that our Sydenhams, and Sangrados, our Lucretius, and Messalinas, our Somers, and our Bolingbrokes—are alike entitled to statues, and all the historians or satirists who have said otherwise since they departed this life, from Sallust to S——e, are guilty of the crimes you charge me with, "cowardice and injustice."

But why cowardice? "because 'tis not courage "to attack a dead man who can't defend himself." —But why do you doctors of the faculty attack such a one with your incision-knife? Oh! for the good of the living.—'Tis my plea.—But I have something more to say in my behalf—and it is this —I am not guilty of the charge—tho' defensible. I have not cut up Doctor Kunastrokius at all.—I have just scratch'd him—and that scarce skin deep. —I do him first all honor—speak of Kunastrokius as a great man—(be he whom he will) and then most distantly hint at a droll foible in his character —and that not first reported (to the few who can even understand the hint) by me—but known before by every chamber-maid and footman within the bills of mortality—but Kunastrokius, you say, was a great man—'tis that very circumstance which makes the pleasantry—for I could name at this instant a score of honest gentlemen who might have done the very thing which Kunastrokius did, and seen no joke in it at all—as to the failing of Kunastrokius, which you say can only be imputed to his friends as a misfortune—I see nothing like a misfortune in it to any friend or relation of Kunastrokius, that Kunastrokius upon occasion should sit

with *** **** and *******—I have put these stars not *to hurt your worship's delicacy.*—If Kunastrokius after all is too sacred a character to be even smiled at (which is all I have done), he has had better luck than his betters: In the same page (without imputation of cowardice) I have said as much of a man of twice his wisdom—and that is Solomon, of whom I have made the same remark, "That they were both great men—and like all "mortal men had each their ruling passion."

—The consolation you give me, "That my "book, however, will be read enough to answer my "design of raising a tax upon the public"—is very unconsolatory—to say nothing how very mortifying! by h——n! an author is worse treated than a common ***** at this rate—"*You will get a "penny by your sins, and that's enough.*" Upon this chapter let me comment.—That I proposed laying the world under contribution when I set pen to paper,—is what I own, and I suppose I may be allow'd to have that view in my head in common with every other writer, to make my labour of advantage to myself.

Do you not do the same? but I beg I may add, that whatever views I had of that kind, I had other views—the first of which was, the hopes of doing the world good, by ridiculing what I thought deserving of it—or of disservice to sound learning, &c.—how I have succeeded, my book must shew —and this I leave entirely to the world—but not to that little world *of your acquaintance*, whose opinion and sentiments you call the general opi-

nion of the best judges *without exception*, who all affirm (you say) that my book cannot be put into the hands of any woman of *character*. (I hope you except widows, doctor—for they are not *all* so squeamish, but I am told they are all really of my party, in return for some good offices done their interests in the 274th page of my first volume.) But for the chaste married, and chaste unmarried part of the sex—they must not read my book! Heaven forbid the stock of chastity should be lessened by the Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy—yes, his Opinions—it would certainly debauch 'em! God take them under his protection in this fiery trial, and send us plenty of Duennas to watch the workings of their humours, till they have safely got through the whole work. If this will not be sufficient, may we have plenty of Sangrados to pour in plenty of cold water, till this terrible fermentation is over—as for the *nummum in loculo*, which you mention to me a second time, I fear you think me very poor, or in debt—I thank God, though I don't abound—that I have enough for a clean shirt every day—and a mutton chop—and my contentment, with this, has thus far (and I hope ever will) put me above stooping an inch for it, even for ——'s estate. Curse on it, I like it not to that degree, nor envy, *(you may be sure)* any man who kneels in the dirt for it—so that howsoever I may fall short of the ends proposed in commencing author—I enter this *protest*, first, that my end was *honest;* and, secondly, that I wrote not to be *fed*, but to be *famous*. I am much

obliged to Mr. Garrick for his very favourable opinion—but why, dear Sir, had he done better in finding fault with it than in commending it? to humble me! an author is not so soon humbled as you imagine—no, but to make the book better by castrations—that is still *sub judice*, and I can assure you upon this chapter, that the very passages and descriptions you propose that I should sacrifice in my second edition, are what are best relished by men of wit, and some others whom I esteem as sound critics—so that, upon the whole, I am still kept up, if not above fear, at least above despair, and have seen enough to shew me the folly of an attempt of castrating my book to the prudish humours of particulars. I believe the short cut would be to publish this letter at the beginning of the third volume, as an apology for the first and second. I was sorry to find a censure upon the insincerity of some of my friends—I have no reason myself to reproach any one man—my friends have continued in the same opinions of my books which they first gave me of them—many indeed have thought better of 'em, by considering them more, few worse.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

LAURENCE STERNE.

LETTER VII.

TO DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

[*About April*, 1760.]

DEAR SIR, Thursday, 11 o'clock—Night.

'Twas for all the world like a cut across my finger with a sharp pen-knife. I saw the blood—gave it a suck—wrapt it up—and thought no more about it.

But there is more goes to the healing of a wound than this comes to:—a wound (unless it is a wound not worth talking of,—but, by the bye, mine is) must give you some pain after. Nature will take her own way with it—it must ferment—it must digest.

The story you told me of Tristram's pretended tutor, this morning—My letter by right should have set out with this sentence, and then the simile would not have kept you a moment in suspense.

This vile story, I say—though I then saw both how, and where it wounded—I felt little from it at first—or, to speak more honestly (though it ruins my simile), I felt a great deal of pain from it, but affected an air usual on such accidents, of less feeling than I had.

I have now got home to my lodgings, since the play (you astonished me in it), and have been unwrapping this self-same wound of mine, and shaking my head over it this half-hour.

What the devil!—is there no one learned blockhead throughout the many schools of misapplied science in the Christian World, to make a *tutor* of

for my Tristram?—*ex quovis ligno non fit*—Are we so run out of stock, that there is no one lumber-headed, muddle-headed, mortar-headed, pudding-headed *chap* amongst our doctors?—Is there no one single wight of much reading and no learning, amongst the many children in my *mother*'s nursery, who bid high for this charge—but I must disable my judgment by choosing a Warburton? Vengeance! have I so little concern for the honor of my hero! Am I a wretch so void of sense, so bereft of feeling for the figure he is to make in story, that I should chuse a preceptor to rob him of all the immortality I intended him? O! dear Mr. Garrick.

Malice is ingenious—unless where the excess of it outwits itself—I have two comforts in this stroke of it; the first is, that this one is partly of this kind; and secondly, that it is one of the number of those which so unfairly brought poor Yorick to his grave. The report might draw blood of the author of Tristram Shandy—but could not harm such a man as the author of the Divine Legation—God bless him! though (by the bye, and according to the natural course of descents) the blessing should come from him to me.

Pray have you no interest, lateral or collateral, to get me introduced to his Lordship?

Why do you ask?

My dear Sir, I have no claim to such an honor, but what arises from the honor and respect which, in the progress of my work, will be shewn the world I owe to so great a man.

Whilst I am talking of owing—I wish, my dear

Sir, that any body would tell you, how much I am indebted to you. I am determined never to do it myself, or say more upon the subject than this, that I am yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER VIII.

TO S—— C——, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, May, 1760.

I RETURN you ten thousand thanks for the favor of your letter—and the account you give me of my wife and girl. I saw Mr. Ch——y to-night at Ranelagh, who tells me you have inoculated my friend Bobby. I heartily wish him well through, and hope in God all goes right.

On Monday we set out with a * grand retinue of Lord Rockingham's (in whose suite I move) for Windsor—they have contracted for fourteen hundred pounds for the dinner, to some general undertaker, of which the K. has bargained to pay one third. Lord George Sackville was last Saturday at the opera, some say with great effrontery,—others, with great dejection.

I have little news to add. There is a shilling pamphlet† wrote against Tristram. I wish they would write a hundred such.

* Prince Ferdinand, the Marquis of Rockingham, and Earl Temple, were installed Knights of the Garter, on Tuesday, May 6th, 1760, at Windsor.

† "The Clock-maker's Outcry against the author of Tristram Shandy." 8vo.

Mrs. Sterne says her purse is light: will you, dear Sir, be so good as to pay her ten guineas, and I will reckon with you, when I have the pleasure of meeting you. My best compliments to Mrs. C. and all friends. Believe me, dear Sir, your obliged and faithful

LAU. STERNE.

LETTER IX.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, May, 1760.

I THIS moment received the favor of your kind letter—the letter in the Ladies' Magazine,* about me, was wrote by the noted Dr. Hill, who wrote the Inspector, and undertakes that magazine—the people of York are very uncharitable to suppose any man so gross a beast as to pen such a character of himself.—In this great town, no soul ever suspected it, for a thousand reasons—could they suppose I should be such a fool as to fall foul upon Dr. Warburton, my best friend, by representing him so weak a man—or by telling such a lie of him—as his giving me a purse, to buy off his tutorship for Tristram!—or I should be fool enough to own I had taken his purse for that purpose!

You must know there is a quarrel between Dr. Hill and Dr. M——y, who was the physician

* The Royal Female Magazine, for April, 1760.

meant at Mr. Charles Stanhope's, and Dr. Hill has changed the place on purpose to give M——y a lick.—Now that conversation (though perhaps true), yet happened at another place,* and with

* As the truth of this anecdote is not denied, it may gratify curiosity to communicate it in Dr. Hill's own words.—"At the last dinner "that the late lost amiable Charles Stanhope gave to genius, Yorick "was present. The good old man was vexed to see a pedantic me-"dicine-monger take the lead, and prevent that pleasantry which "good wit and good wine might have occasioned, by a discourse in "the unintelligible language of his profession, concerning the differ-"ence between the phrenitis and the paraphrenitis, and the concomi-"tant categories of the mediastinum and pleura.

"Good-humoured Yorick saw the sense of the master of the feast, "and fell into the cant and jargon of physic, as if he had been one of "Radcliffe's travellers. 'The vulgar practice,' says he, 'savors too "much of mechanical principles; the venerable ancients were all em-"pirics, and the profession will never regain its ancient credit, till "practice falls into the old track again. I am myself an instance; "I caught cold by leaning on a damp cushion, and, after sneezing "and sniveling a fortnight, it fell upon my breast: they blooded me, "blistered me, and gave me robs and bobs, and lohocks and eclegmata; but I grew worse; for I was treated according to the exact "rules of the College. In short, from an inflammation it came to an "ADHESION, and all was over with me. They advised me to Bristol, "that I might not do them the scandal of dying under their hands; "and the Bristol people for the same reason consigned me over to "Lisbon. But what do I? why I considered an adhesion is, in plain "English, only a sticking of two things together, and that force "enough would pull them asunder. I bought a good ash pole, and "began leaping over all the walls and ditches in the country. From "the height of the pole I used to come souse down upon my feet, "like an ass, when he tramples upon a bull dog, but it did no do. "At last—when I had raised myself, perpendicularly over a wall, I "used to fall exactly across the ridge of it upon the side opposite to "the adhesion. This tore it off at *once*, and I am as you see. "Come, fill a glass to the memory of the empiric medicine.' If he "had been asked elsewhere about this disorder (for he really had a "consumptive disorder,) he would have answered, that he was "cured by Huxham's decoction of the bark, and elixir of vitriol."

another physician; which I have contradicted in this city, for the honor of my friend M——y: all which shews the absurdity of York credulity and nonsense. Besides, the account is full of falsehoods—first, with regard to the place of my birth, which was at Clonmel, in Ireland—the story of a hundred pounds to Mrs. W——,* not true, or of a *pension promised;* the merit of which I disclaimed—and indeed there are so many other things so untrue, and unlikely to come from me, that the worst enemy I have here never had a suspicion—and, to end all, Dr. Hill owns the paper.

I shall be down before May is out—I preach before the judges on Sunday—my Sermons come out on Thursday after—and I purpose, the Monday, at furthest, after that, to set out for York—I have bought a pair of horses for that purpose—my best respects to your Lady——

I am, Dear Sir,
Your most obliged and faithful

L. STERNE.

P. S.—I beg pardon for this hasty scrawl, having just come from a concert where the D. of York performed.—I have received great notice from him, and last week had the honor of supping with him.

* The Widow of Mr. Sterne's predecessor in the living of Coxwould.

LETTER X.

TO DR. WARBURTON, BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.

MY LORD, York, June 9, 1760.

NOT knowing where to send two sets of my Sermons, I could think of no better expedient than to order them into Mr. Berenger's hands, who has promised me that he will wait upon your Lordship with them, the first moment he hears you are in town. The truest and humblest thanks I return to your Lordship, for the generosity of your protection, and advice to me; by making a good use of the one, I will hope to deserve the other: I wish your Lordship all the health and happiness in this world, for I am

Your Lordship's
Most obliged and
Most grateful Servant,
L. STERNE.

P. S. I am just sitting down to go on with Tristram, &c.—the scribblers use me ill, but they have used my betters much worse, for which may God forgive them.

LETTER XI.

TO THE REV. MR. STERNE.

REVEREND SIR, Prior-Park, June 15, 1760.

I HAVE your favor of the 9th instant, and am glad to understand you are got safe home, and employed again in your proper studies and amusements. You have it in your power to make that, which is an amusement to yourself and others, useful to both: at least you should, above all things, beware of its becoming hurtful to either, by any violations of decency and good manners: but I have already taken such repeated liberties of advising you on that head, that to say more would be needless, or perhaps unacceptable,

Whoever is, in any way, well received by the public, is sure to be annoyed by that pest of the public, *profligate scribblers*. This is the common lot of successful adventurers;—but such have often a worse evil to struggle with, I mean the over officiousness of their indiscreet friends. There are two Odes,* as they are called, printed by Dodsley. Whoever was the author, he appears to be a monster of impiety and lewdness—yet, such is the malignity of the scribblers, some have given them to your friend Hall;—and others, which is still more impossible, to yourself; though the first Ode has the insolence to place you both in a mean and a

* Intitled, "Two Lyric Epistles: One to my Cousin Shandy, on "his coming to Town; and the other to the Grown Gentlewomen, the "Misses of * * * *" 4to.

ridiculous light. But this might arise from a tale equally groundless and malignant, that you had shewn them to your acquaintances in MS. before they were given to the public. Nor was their being printed by Dodsley the likeliest means of discrediting the calumny.

About this time, another, under the mask of friendship, pretended to draw your character, which was since published in a *Female Magazine* (for dulness, who often has as great a hand as the devil, in deforming God's works of the creation, has *made them*, it seems, *male* and *female,)* and from thence it was transferred into a *Chronicle.** Pray have you read it, or do you know its author?

But of all these things, I dare say Mr. Garrick, whose prudence is equal to his honesty or his talents, has remonstrated to you with the freedom of a friend. He knows the inconstancy of what is called the Public, towards all, even the best intentioned, of those who contribute to its pleasure or amusement. He (as every man of honor and discretion would) has availed himself of the public favor, to regulate the taste, and, in his proper station, to reform the manners of the fashionable world;—while, by a well-judged œconomy, he has provided against the temptations of a mean and servile dependency on the follies and vices of the great.

In a word, be assured, there is no one more sincerely wishes your welfare and happiness, than,

Reverend Sir,

W. G.

* The London Chronicle, May 6, 1760.

LETTER XII.

TO MY WITTY WIDOW, MRS. F——.

MADAM, Coxwould, August 3, 1760.

WHEN a man's brains are as dry as a squeez'd orange,—and he feels he has no more conceit in him than a mallet, 'tis in vain to think of sitting down, and writing a letter to a lady of your wit, unless in the honest John-Trot-Style of *yours of the 15th instant came safe to hand, &c.* which, by the bye, looks like a letter of business; and you know very well, from the first letter I had the honor to write to you, I am a man of no business at all. This vile plight I found my genius in was the reason I have told Mr. ——, I would not write to you till the next post—hoping by that time to get some small recruit, at least of vivacity, if not wit, to set out with;—but upon second thoughts, thinking a bad letter in season—to be better than a good one out of it—this scrawl is the consequence, which if you will burn the moment you get it—I promise to send you a fine set essay in the style of your female epistolizers, cut and trim'd at all points. God defend me from such, who never yet knew what it was to say or write one premeditated word in my whole life—for this reason I send you this with pleasure, because wrote with the careless irregularity of an easy heart.——Who told

you Garrick wrote the medley for Beard ?—'Twas wrote in his house, however, and before I left town. I deny it—I was not lost two days before I left town. I was lost all the time I was there, and never found till I got to this Shandy-castle of mine. Next winter I intend to sojourn amongst you with more decorum, and will neither be lost or found any where.

Now I wish to God, I was at your elbow—I have just finished one volume of Shandy, and I want to read it to some one who I know can taste and relish humour—this by the way, is a little impudent in me—for I take the thing for granted, which their high mightinesses the world have yet to determine—but I mean no such thing—I could wish only to have your opinion—shall I, in truth, give you mine ?—I dare not—but I will; provided you keep it to yourself—know then, that I think there is more laughable humour,—with an equal degree of Cervantic satire—if not more than in the last—but we are bad judges of the merit of our children.

I return you a thousand thanks for your friendly congratulations upon my habitation—and I will take care, you shall never wish me but well, for I am, Madam,

With great esteem and truth,
Your most obliged,

L. STERNE.

P. S. I have wrote this so vilely and so precipitately, I fear you must carry it to a decypherer—I

beg you'll do me the honor to write—otherwise you draw *me* in, instead of Mr. —— drawing *you* into a scrape—for I should sorrow to have a *taste* of so agreeable a correspondent—and *no more*.

Adieu.

LETTER XIII.

TO S—— C——, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND, London, Christmas Day, 1760.

I HAVE been in such a continual hurry since the moment I arrived here—what with my books, and what with visitors and visitings, that it was not in my power sooner to sit down and acknowledge the favor of your obliging letter: and to thank you for the most friendly motives which led you to write it: I am not much in pain upon what gives my kind friends at Stillington so much on the chapter of *Noses*—because, as the principal satire throughout that part is levelled at those learned blockheads who, in all ages, have wasted their time and much learning upon points as foolish—it shifts off the idea of what you fear, to another point—and 'tis thought here very good—'twill pass muster—I mean not with all—no—no! I shall be attacked and pelted, either from cellars or garrets, write what I will—and besides, must expect to have a party against me of many hundreds—who either do not—or will not laugh. 'Tis enough if

I divide the world;—at least I will rest contented with it. I wish you was here to see what changes of looks and political reasoning have taken place in every company and coffee-house since last year; we shall be soon Prussians, and Anti-Prussians, B——s and Anti-B——s, and those distinctions will just do as well as Whig and Tory—and for ought I know serve the same ends. The king seems resolved to bring all things back to their original principles, and to stop the torrent of corruption and laziness. He rises every morning at six to do business—rides out at eight to a minute, returns at nine to give himself up to his people. By persisting, 'tis thought he will oblige his ministers and dependants to dispatch affairs with him many hours sooner than of late—and 'tis much to be questioned whether they will not be enabled to wait upon him sooner by being freed from long levees of their own, and applications; which will in all likelihood be transferred from them directly to himself—the present system being to remove that phalanx of great people, which stood betwixt the throne and the subjects, and suffer them to have immediate access without the intervention of a cabal—(this is the language of others): however, the king gives every thing himself, knows every thing, and weighs every thing maturely, and then is inflexible—this puts old stagers off their game—how it will end we are all in the dark.

'Tis feared the war is quite over in Germany; never was known such havoc amongst troops—I was told yesterday by a colonel from Germany.

that out of two battalions of nine hundred men, to which he belonged, but seventy one are left!—Prince Ferdinand has sent word, 'tis said, that he must have forty thousand men directly to take the field—and with provisions for them too, for he can but subsist them for a fortnight—I hope this will find you all got to York—I beg my compliments to the amiable Mrs. Croft, &c. &c.

Tho' I purposed going first to Golden-Square, yet fate has thus long disposed of me—so I have never been able to set a foot towards that quarter.

I am, dear Sir,
Your's affectionately,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XIV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, [*About January*, 1761.]

I HAVE just time to acknowledge the favor of yours, but not to get the two prints you mention —which shall be sent you by next post—I have bought them, and lent them to Miss Gilbert, but will assuredly send for them and enclose them to you:—I will take care to get your pictures well copied, and at a moderate price. And if I can be of further use, I beseech you to employ me; and from time to time will send you an account of whatever may be worth transmitting. The stream

now sets in strong against the German war. Loud complaints of ——, —— —— making a trade of the war, &c. &c. &c. much expected from Ld. Granby's evidence to these matters, who is expected every hour: the King wins every day upon the people, shews himself much at the play (but at no opera), rides out with his brothers every morning, half-an-hour after seven, till nine—returns with them, spends an hour with them at breakfast and chat—and then sits down to business. I never dined at home once since I arrived—am fourteen dinners deep engaged just now, and fear matters will be worse with me in that point than better. ——As to the main points in view, at which you hint—all I can say is, that I see my way, and unless Old Nick throws the dice—shall in due time come off winner.——Tristram will be out the twentieth—There is a great rout about him before he enters the stage—whether this will be of use or no, I can't say—some wits of the first magnitude here, both as to wit and station, engage me success—time will shew—

Adieu.

LETTER XV.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, [*March*, 1761.]

SINCE I had the favor of your obliging letter, nothing has happened, or been said one day, which has not been contradicted the next; so having

little certain to write, I have forebore writing at all, in hopes every day of something worth filling up a letter. We had the greatest expectations yesterday that ever were raised of a pitched battle in the House of Commons, wherein Mr. Pitt was to have entered and thrown down the gauntlet, in defence of the German war. There never was so full a house—the gallery full to the top—I was there all the day—when lo! a political fit of the gout seized the great combatant—he entered not the lists—Beckford got up, and begged the house, as he saw not his right honorable friend there, to put off the debate—it could not be done, so Beckford rose up, and made a most long, passionate, incoherent speech, in defence of the Germanic war —but very severe upon the unfrugal manner it was carried on—in which he addressed himself principally to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and laid him on terribly. It seems the chancery of Hanover had laid out 350,000 pounds on account, and brought in our treasury debtor—and the grand debate was, for an honest examination of the particulars of this extravagant account, and for vouchers to authenticate it. Legge answered Beckford very rationally and coolly. Lord N. spoke long—Sir F. Dashwood maintained the German war was most pernicious—Mr. C——, of Surry, spoke well against the account, with some others. —L. Barrington at last got up, and spoke half-an-hour with great plainness and temper—explained a great many hidden springs relating to these accounts, in favor of the late King, and told two or

three conversations which had passed between the King and himself, relative to these expences—which cast great honor upon the King's character. This was with regard to the money the King had secretly furnished out of his pocket to lessen the account of the Hanover-score brought us to discharge.

Beckford and Barrington abused all who sought for peace, and joined in the cry for it; and Beckford added, that the reasons of wishing a peace now, were the same as the peace of Utrecht—that the people behind the curtain could not both maintain the war and their places too, so were for making another sacrifice of the nation to their own interests—After all—the cry for a peace is so general, that it will certainly end in one. Now for myself.—

One half of the town abuse my book as bitterly, as the other half cry it up to the skies—the best is, they abuse and buy it, and at such a rate, that we are going on with a second edition as fast as possible.

I am going down for a day or two with Mr. Spencer to Wimbleton; on Wednesday there is to be a grand assembly at Lady N——: I have enquired every where about Stephen's affair, and can hear nothing. My friend, Mr. Charles Townshend, will be now secretary-at-war*—he bid me wish him joy of it, though not in possession—I will ask him—and depend, my most worthy friend,

* He was appointed secretary-at-war the 24th of March, 1761.

that you shall not be ignorant of what I learn from him. Believe me ever, ever,

Yours,

L. S.

LETTER XVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, [*April*, 1761.]

A STRAIN which I got in my wrist by a terrible fall, prevented my acknowledging the favor of your obliging letter. I went yesterday morning to breakfast with Mr. V——, who is a kind of right-hand man to the secretary, on purpose to enquire about the propriety, or feasibility, of doing what you wish me—and he has told me an anecdote, which, had you been here, would, I think, have made it wiser to have deferred speaking about the affair a month hence than now; it is this—You must know that the numbers of officers who have left their regiments in Germany, for the pleasures of the town, have been long a topic for merriment; as you see them in St. James's Coffee-house, and the Park, every hour, enquiring open mouth, how things go on in Germany, and what news—when they should have been there to have furnished news themselves;—but the worst part has been, that many of them have left their brother-officers on their duty, and in all the fatigues of it, and have come with no end but to make friends, to

be put unfairly over the *heads of those* who were left risking *their lives*.—In this attempt there have been some but too successful, which has justly raised ill-blood and complaints from the officers who staid behind—the upshot has been, that they have every soul been ordered off, and woe be to him, ('tis said) who shall be found listening! Now just to mention our friend's case, whilst this cry is on foot, I think would be doing more hurt than good: but if you think otherwise, I will go with all my heart, and mention it to Mr. Townshend, for to do more I am too inconsiderable a person to pretend to.—You made me and my friends here very merry with the accounts current at York, of my being forbid the court—but they do not consider what a considerable person they make of me, when they suppose either my going, or my not going there, is a point that ever enters the King's head —and for those about him, I have the honor either to stand so personally well known to them, or to be so well represented by those of the first rank, as to fear no accident of that kind.

I thank God (B——s excepted) I have never yet made a friend or connection I have forfeited, or done aught to forfeit—but, on the contrary, my true character is better understood, and where I had one friend last year, who did me honor, I have three now.—If my enemies knew, that by this rage of abuse and ill-will, they were effectually serving the interests both of myself and works, they would be more quiet—but it has been the fate of my betters, who have found, that the way to fame, is like

the way to heaven, through much tribulation—and till I shall have the honor to be as much mal-treated as Rabelais and Swift were, I must continue humble; for I have not filled up the measure of half their *persecutions*.

The court is turning topsy-turvy. Lord Bute, le premier*—Lord Talbot, to be groom of the chambers† in the room of the D. of R——d—Lord Halifax to Ireland‡—Sir F. Dashwood in Talbot's place—Pitt seems unmoved—a peace inevitable—Stocks rise—the peers this moment kissing hands, &c. &c. (this week may be christened the kiss-hands week) for a hundred changes will happen in consequence of these. Pray present my compliments to Mrs. C. and all friends, and believe me, with the greatest fidelity,

Your ever obliged

L. STERNE.

P. S. Is it not strange that Lord Talbot should have power to remove the Duke of R——d?

Pray when you have read this, send the news to Mrs. Sterne.

* Lord Bute was appointed Secretary-of-state on the 26th of March, 1761.

† Lord Talbot was appointed Steward of the Household on the same day.

‡ Lord Halifax was appointed Lord-lieutenant of Ireland on the 20th of March, 1761.

LETTER XVII

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

DEAR H——. Coxwould, July 28, 1761.

I SYMPATHISED for, or with you, on the detail you give me of your late agitations—and would willingly have taken my horse, and trotted to the oracle to have enquired into the etymology of all your sufferings, had I not been assured, that all evacuation of bilious matter, with all that abdominal motion attending it (both which are equal to a month's purgation and exercise) will have left you better than it found you—Need one go to D——, to be told that all kind of mild (mark I am going to talk more foolishly than your apothecary), opening, saponacious, dirty-shirt, sud-washing liquors are proper for you, and consequently all styptical potations, death and destruction—if you had not shut up your gallducts by these, the glauber-salts could not have hurt—as it was, 'twas like a match to the gunpowder, by raising a fresh combustion, as all physic does at first, so that you have been let off—nitre, brimstone, and charcoal (which is blackness itself), all at one blast—'twas well the piece did not burst, for I think it underwent great violence, and as it is proof, will, I hope, do much service in this militating world—Panty* is mistaken, I quarrel with no one.—There was that coxcomb of —— in the house, who lost temper

* The Reverend Mr. R—— L——.

with me for no reason upon earth but that I could not fall down and worship a brazen image of learning and eloquence, which he set up, to the persecution of all true believers—I sat down upon *his altar*, and whistled in the time of his divine service—and broke down his carved work, and kicked his incense-pot to the D——, so he retreated, *sed non sine felle in corde suo.*—I have wrote a clerum; whether I shall take my doctor's degrees or no—I am much in doubt, but I trow not.—I go on with Tristram—I have bought seven hundred books at a purchase dog cheap—and many good—and I have been a week getting them set up in my best room here—why do not you transport yours to town? but I talk like a fool.—This will just catch you at your spaw—I wish you *incolumem apud Londinum*—do you go there for good and all—or ill?—I am, dear cousin,

Yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XVIII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR H——, Coxwould [*about August*], 1761.

I REJOICE you are in London—rest you there in peace:—here 'tis the devil. You was a good prophet.—I wish myself back again, as you told me I should—but not because a thin, death-doing, pestiferous, north-east wind blows in a line directly

from Crazy-castle turret full upon me in this cuckoldy retreat (for I value the north-east wind and all its powers not a straw),—but the transition from rapid motion to absolute rest was too violent.—I should have walked about the streets of York ten days, as a proper medium to have passed through, before I entered upon my rest.—I staid but a moment, and I have been here but a few, to satisfy me I have not managed my miseries like a wise man—and if God, for my consolation under them, had not poured forth the spirit of Shandeism into me, which will not suffer me to think two moments upon any grave subject, I would else, just now, lie down and die—die—and yet, in half an hour's time, I'll lay a guinea, I shall be as merry as a monkey—and as mischievous too, and forget it all—so that this is but a copy of the present train running cross my brain.—And so you think this cursed stupid—but that, my dear H., depends much upon the quotâ horâ of your shabby clock, if the pointer of it is in any quarter between ten in the morning or four in the afternoon—I give it up—or if the day is obscured by dark engendering clouds of either wet or dry weather, I am still lost—but who knows but it may be five and the day as fine a day as ever shone upon the earth since the destruction of Sodom,—and peradventure your Honor may have got a good hearty dinner to-day, and eat and drank your intellectuals into a placidulish and a blandulish amalgama—to bear nonsense, so much for that.

'Tis as cold and churlish just now, as (if God

had not pleased it to be so) it ought to have been in bleak December, and therefore I am glad you are where you are, and where (I repeat it again) I wish I was also—Curse of poverty and absence from those we love!—they are two great evils which embitter all things—and yet with the first I am not haunted much.—As to matrimony, I should be a beast to rail at it; for my wife is easy—but the world is not—and had I staid from her a second longer, it would have been a burning shame—else she declares herself happier without me—but not in anger is this declaration made—but in pure sober good sense, built on sound experience—she hopes you will be able to strike a bargain for me before this time twelvemonth, to lead a bear round Europe: and from this hope from you, I verily believe it is, that you are so high in her favor at present—She swears you are a fellow of wit, though humorous; a funny, jolly soul, though somewhat splenetic; and (bating the love of women) as honest as *gold*—how do you like the simile!—Oh, Lord! now are you going to Ranelagh to-night, and I am sitting sorrowful as the prophet was, when the voice cried out to him, and said, "What dost thou here, Elijah?"—'Tis well the spirit does not make the same at Coxwould—for, unless for the few sheep left me to take care of, in this wilderness, I might as well, nay better, be at Mecca.—When we find we can, by a shifting of places, run away from ourselves, what think you of a jaunt there, before we finally pay a visit to the

vale of Jehosaphat?—As ill a fame as we have, I trust I shall one day or other see you face to face—so tell the two colonels, if they love good company, to live righteously and soberly, as *you do*, and then they will have no doubts or dangers within or without them—present my best and warmest wishes to them, and advise the eldest to prop up his spirits, and get a rich dowager before the conclusion of the peace—why will not the advice suit both, *par nobile fratrum?*

To-morrow morning (if Heaven permit) I begin the fifth volume* of Shandy—I care not a curse for the critics—I'll load my vehicle with what goods *he* sends me, and they may take 'em off my hands, or let them alone—I am very valorous—and 'tis in proportion as we retire from the world, and see it in its true dimensions, that we despise it—no bad rant!—God above bless you! You know I am

Your affectionate cousin,

LAURENCE STERNE.

What few remain of the Demoniacs, greet—and write me a letter, if you are able, as foolish as this.

* * Alluding to the first edition.

LETTER XIX.

TO LADY ——.

Coxwould, Sept. 21, 1761.

I RETURN to my new habitation, fully determined to write as hard as can be, and thank you most cordially, my dear lady, for your letter of congratulation upon my Lord Fauconberg's having presented me with the curacy of this place—though your congratulation comes somewhat of the latest, as I have been possessed of it some time.—I hope I have been of some service to his Lordship, and he has sufficiently requited me.—'Tis seventy guineas a-year in my pocket, though worth a hundred—but it obliges me to have a curate to officiate at Sutton and Stillington.—'Tis within a mile of his Lordship's seat and park. 'Tis a very agreeable ride out in the chaise I purchased for my wife.—Lyd has a poney which she delights in.—Whilst they take these diversions, I am scribbling away at my Tristram. These two volumes are, I think, the best.—I shall write as long as I live, 'tis, in fact, my hobby-horse: and so much am I delighted with my uncle Toby's imaginary character, that I am become an enthusiast.—My Lydia helps to copy for me—and my wife knits, and listens as I read her chapters.—The coronation of his Majesty (whom God preserve!) has cost me the value of an ox, which is to be roasted whole in the middle of the town, and my parishioners will, I suppose,

be very merry upon the occasion.—You will then be in town—and feast your eyes with a sight, which 'tis to be hoped will not be in either of our powers to see again—for in point of age we have about twenty years the start of his Majesty.—And now, my dear friend, I must finish this—and with every wish for your happines, conclude myself your most sincere well-wisher and friend,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XX.

TO DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Paris, Jan. 31, 1762.

THINK not, because I have been a fortnight in this metropolis without writing to you, that therefore I have not had you and Mrs. Garrick a hundred times in my head and heart—heart! yes, yes, say you—but I must not waste paper in *badinage* this post, whatever I do the next. Well! here I am, my friend, as much improved in my health, for the time, as ever your friendship could wish, or at least your faith give credit to—by the bye, I am somewhat worse in my intellectuals, for my head is turned round with what I see, and the unexpected honors I have met with here. Tristram was almost as much known here as in London, at least among your men of condition and learning, and has got me introduced into so many circles ('tis *comme à Londres*). I have just now a fortnight's dinners and

suppers upon my hands.—My application to the Count de Choiseul goes on swimmingly, for not only M. Pelletiere (who, by the bye, sends ten thousand civilities to you and Mrs. Garrick) has undertaken my affair, but the Count de Limbourgh —the Baron d'Holbach, has offered any security for the inoffensiveness of my behaviour in France —'tis more, you rogue! than you will do.—This Baron is one of the most learned noblemen here, the great protector of wits, and the Sçavans who are no wits—keeps open house three days a-week —his house is now, as yours was to me, my own —he lives at great expence.—'Twas an odd incident when I was introduced to the Count de Bissie, which I was at his desire—I found him reading Tristram—this grandee does me great honors, and gives me leave to go a private way through his apartments into the Palais Royal, to view the Duke of Orleans's collections, every day I have time.—I have been at the doctors of Sorbonne.—I hope in a fortnight to break through, or rather from the delights of this place, which, in the *sçavoir vivre*, exceeds all the places, I believe, in this section of the globe.——

I am going, when this letter is wrote, with Mr. Fox and Mr. Maccartny, to Versailles—the next morning I wait upon Mons. Titon, in company with Mr. Maccartny who is known to him, to deliver your commands.—I have bought you the pamphlet upon theatrical, or rather tragical, declamation; I have bought another in verse worth

reading, and you will receive them, with what I can pick up this week, by a servant of Mr. Hodges, whom he is sending back to England.

I was last night with Mr. Fox to see Mademoiselle Clairon, in *Iphigene*—she is extremely great—would to God you had one or two like her—what a luxury, to see you with one of such powers in the same interesting scene—but 'tis too much.—Ah! Preville! thou art Mercury himself.—By virtue of taking a couple of boxes, we have bespoke this week, *The Frenchman in London*, in which Preville is to send us home to supper; *all happy*—I mean about fifteen or sixteen English of distinction, who are now here, and live well with each other.

I am under great obligations to Mr. Pitt, who has behaved in every respect to me like a man of good-breeding, and good-nature.—In a post or two, I will write again. Foley is an honest soul.—I could write six volumes of what has past comically in this great scene, since these last fourteen days—but more of this hereafter.—We are all going into mourning; nor you, nor Mrs. Garrick, would know me, if you met me in my *remise*.—Bless you both! Service to Mrs. Denis. Adieu, adieu!

L. S.

LETTER XXI.

TO LADY D——.

London,* Feb. 1, 1762.

YOUR Ladyship's kind enquiries after my health are indeed kind, and of a-piece with the rest of your character. Indeed I am very ill, having broke a vessel in my lungs—hard writing in the summer, together with preaching, which I have not strength for, is ever fatal to me—but I cannot avoid the latter yet, and the former is too pleasurable to be given up—I believe I shall try if the south of France will not be of service to me—his G. of Y. has most humanely given me the permission for a year or two—I shall set off with great hopes of its efficacy, and shall write to my wife and daughter to come and join me at Paris, else my stay could not be so long—" Le Fevre's " story has beguiled your ladyship of your tears," and the thought of the accusing spirit flying up to heaven's chancery with the oath, you are kind enough to say is sublime—my friend, Mr. Garrick, thinks so too, and I am most vain of his approbation—your Ladyship's opinion adds not a little to my vanity.

I wish I had time to take a little excursion to Bath, were it only to thank you for all the obliging things you say in your letter—but 'tis

* This Letter, though dated from *London*, was evidently written at *Paris*.

impossible—accept at least my warmest thanks—If I could tempt my friend Mr. H. to come to France, I should be truly happy—If I can be of any service to you at Paris, command him who is, and ever will be,

Your Ladyship's faithful

L. STERNE.

LETTER XXII.

TO DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

DEAR GARRICK, Paris, March 19, 1762.

THIS will be put into your hands by Dr. Shippen, a physician, who has been here some time with Miss Poyntz, and is this moment setting off for your metropolis; so I snatch the opportunity of writing to you and my kind friend Mrs. Garrick.—I see nothing like her here, and yet I have been introduced to one half of their best Goddesses, and in a month more shall be admitted to the shrines of the other half—but I neither worship—or fall (much) upon my knees before them; but, on the contrary, have converted many unto Shandeism—for be it known, I Shandy it away fifty times more than I was ever wont, talk more nonsense than ever you heard me talk in your days—and to all sorts of people. *Qui le diable est cet homme là*—said Choiseul, t'other day—*ce Chevalier Shandy*—You'll think me as vain as a devil, was I to tell you the rest of the dialogue—

whether the bearer knows it or no, I know not—'Twill serve up after supper, in Southampton-street, amongst other small dishes, after the fatigues of Richard the Third.—O God! they have nothing here, which gives the nerves so smart a blow, as those great characters in the hands of Garrick! but I forgot I am writing to the man himself——The devil take (as he will) these transports of enthusiasm? Apropos—the whole city of Paris is *bewitch'd* with the comic opera, and if it was not for the affair of the Jesuits, which takes up one half of our talk, the comic opera would have it all—It is a tragical nuisance in all companies as it is, and was it not for some sudden starts and dashes—of Shandeism, which now and then either break the thread, or entangle it so, that the devil himself would be puzzled in winding it off—I should die a martyr—this by the way I never will—

I send you over some of these comic operas by the bearer, with the *Sallon*, a satire—The French comedy, I seldom visit it—they act scarce any thing but tragedies—and the Clairon is great, and Madamoiselle Dumesnil, in some places, still greater than her—yet I cannot bear preaching—I fancy I got a surfeit of it in my younger days.—There is a tragady to be damn'd to-night—peace be with it, and the gentle brain which made it! I have ten thousand things to tell you; I cannot write—I do a thousand things which cut no figure, *but in the doing*—and as in London, I have the honor of having done and said a thousand things I

never did or dream'd of—and yet I dream abundantly—If the devil stood behind me in the shape of a courier, I could not write faster than I do, having five letters more to dispatch by the same Gentleman; he is going into another section of the globe, and when he has seen you, he will depart in peace.

The Duke of Orleans has suffered my portrait to be added to the number of some odd men in his collection; and a gentleman who lives with him has taken it most expressively, at full length—I purpose to obtain an etching of it, and to send it you—your prayer for me of *rosy health*, is heard —If I stay here for three or four months, I shall return more than reinstated. My love to Mrs. Garrick.

I am, my dear Garrick,
Your most humble servant,
L. STERNE.

LETTER XXIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR GARRICK, Paris, April 10, 1762.

I SNATCH the occasion of Mr. Wilcox (the late Bishop of Rochester's son) leaving this place for England, to write to you, and I inclose it to Hall, who will put it into your hand, possibly behind the scenes. I hear no news of you, or your *empire*, I would have said *kingdom*—but here every

thing is hyperbolized—and if a woman is but simply pleased—'tis *Je suis charmé*—and if she is charmed, 'tis nothing less than she is *ravi*-sh'd—and when ravi-sh'd (which may happen) there is nothing left for her but to fly to the other world for a metaphor, and swear, qu'elle étoit tout *extasiée*—which mode of speaking is, by the bye, here creeping into use, and there is scarce a woman who understands the *bon ton* but is seven times in a day in downright extasy—that is, the devil's in her—by a small mistake of one world for the other—Now, where am I got?

I have been these two days reading a tragedy, given me by a lady of talents to read, and conjecture if it would do for you—'Tis from the plan of Diderot, and possibly half a translation of it.—The Natural Son, or the Triumph of Virtue, in five acts—It has too much sentiment in it (at least for me), the speeches too long, and savor too much of *preaching*—this may be a second reason, it is not to my taste—'Tis all love, love, love, throughout, without much separation in the character; so I fear it would not do for your stage, and perhaps for the very reasons which recommend it to a French one.—After a vile suspension of three weeks—we are beginning with our comedies and operas again—yours I hear never flourished more—here the comic actors were never so low—the tragedians hold up their heads—in all senses. I have known *one little man* support the theatrical world, like a David Atlas, upon his shoulders, but Preville can't do half as much here, though Mademoiselle Clairon

stands by him, and sets her back to his—she is very great, however, and highly improved since you saw her—she also supports her dignity at table, and has her public day every Thursday, when she *gives to eat* (as they say here) to all that are hungry and dry.

You are much talked of here, and much expected as soon as the peace will let you—these two last days you have happened to engross the whole conversation at two great houses where I was at dinner—'Tis the greatest problem in nature, in this meridian, that one and the same man should possess such tragic and comic powers, and in such an equilibrio, as to divide the world for which of the two Nature intended him.

Crebillion has made a convention with me, which, if he is not too lazy, will be no bad *persiflage*—as soon as I get to Toulouse, he has agreed to write me an expostulatory letter upon the indecorums of T. Shandy—which is to be answered by recrimination upon the liberties in his own works—these are to be printed together—Crebillion against Sterne—Sterne against Crebillion—the copy to be sold, and the money equally divided—This is good Swiss-policy.

I am recovered greatly, and if I could spend one whole winter at Toulouse, I should be fortified, in my inner man, beyond all danger of relapsing.—A sad asthma my daughter has been martyr'd with these three winters, but mostly this last, makes it, I fear, necessary she should try the last remedy of a warmer and softer air, so I am going this week to

Versailles, to wait upon Count Choiseul to solicit passports for them—If this system takes place, they join me here—and after a month's stay we all decamp for the south of France—if not, I shall see you in June next. Mr. Fox, and Mr. Maccartny, having left Paris, I live altogether in French families—I laugh till I cry, and in the same tender moments *cry till I laugh*. I Shandy it more than ever, and verily do believe, that by mere Shandeism, sublimated by a laughter-loving people, I fence as much against infirmities, as I do by the benefit of air and climate. Adieu, dear Garrick! present ten thousand of my best respects and wishes to and for my friend Mrs. Garrick—had she been last night upon the Tuilleries, she would have annihilated a thousand French goddesses, *in one single turn.*

I am, most truly,
My dear friend,
L. STERNE.

LETTER XXIV.

TO MRS. STERNE, YORK.

MY DEAR, Paris, May 16th, 1762.

It is a thousand to one that this reaches you before you have set out—However, I take the chance—you will receive one wrote last night, the moment you get to Mr. E. and to wish you joy of

your arrival in town—to that letter which you will find in town, I have nothing to add that I can think on—for I have almost drain'd my brains dry upon the subject. For God sake rise early and gallop away in the cool—and always see that you have not forgot your baggage in changing post-chaises—You will find good tea upon the road from York to Dover—only bring a little to carry you from Calais to Paris—give the Custom-House Officers what I told you—at Calais give more, if you have much Scotch snuff—but as tobacco is good here, you had best bring a Scotch mill and make it yourself, that is, order your valet to manufacture it—'twill keep him out of mischief. I would advise you to take three days in coming up, for fear of heating yourselves—See that they do not give you a bad vehicle, when a better is in the yard, but you will look sharp—drink small Rhenish to keep you cool (that is if you like it). Live well, and deny yourselves nothing your hearts wish. So God in heaven prosper and go along with you—kiss my Lydia, and believe me both affectionately,

Yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XXV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR, Paris, May 31, 1762.

THERE have no mails arrived here till this morning, for three posts, so I expected with great impatience a letter from you and Lydia—and lo! it is arrived. You are as busy as Thorp's wife, and by the time you receive this, you will be busier still—I have exhausted all my ideas about your journey—and what is needful for you to do before and during it—so I write only to tell you I am well—Mr. Colebrooks, the minister of Swisserland's secretary, I got this morning to write a letter for you to the governor of the Custom-House Office at Calais—it shall be sent you next post.—You must be cautious about Scotch snuff—take half-a-pound in your pocket, and make Lyd do the same. 'Tis well I bought you a chaise—there is no getting one in Paris now, but at an enormous price—for they are all sent to the army, and such a one as yours we have not been able to match for forty guineas, for a friend of mine who is going from hence to Italy—the weather was never known to set in so hot, as it has done the latter end of this month, so he and his party are to get into his chaise by four in the morning, and travel till nine—and not stir out again till six;—but I hope this severe heat will abate by the time

you come here—however, I beg of you once more to take special care of heating your blood in travelling, and come *toute doucement*, when you find the heat too much—I shall look impatiently for intelligence from you, and hope to hear all goes well; that you conquer all difficulties, that you have received your passport, my picture, &c. Write and tell me something of every thing. I long to see you both, you may be assured, my dear wife and child, after so long a separation—— and write me a line directly, that I may have all the notice you can give me, that I may have apartments ready and fit for you when you arrive. For my own part I shall continue writing to you a fortnight longer—present my respects to all friends—you have bid Mr. C. get my visitations at P. done for me, &c. &c. If any offers are made about the inclosure at Rascal, they must be inclosed to me—nothing that is fairly proposed shall stand still on my score. Do all for the best, as He who guides all things will I hope do for us—so heaven preserve you both—believe me

Your affectionate

L. STERNE.

Love to my Lydia—I have bought her a gold watch to present to her when she comes.

LETTER XXVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR, Paris, June 7, 1762.

I KEEP my promise and write to you again—I am sorry the bureau must be opened for the deeds—but you will see it done—I imagine you are convinced of the necessity of bringing three hundred pounds in your pocket—if you consider Lydia must have too slight negligees—you will want a new gown or two—as for painted linens, buy them in town, they will be more admired because English than French. Mrs. H. writes me word that I am mistaken about buying silk cheaper at Toulouse than Paris, that she advises you to buy what you want here—where they are very beautiful and cheap, as well as blonds, gauzes, &c. These I say will all cost you sixty guineas—and you must have them—for in this country nothing must be spared for the back—and if you dine on an onion, and lie in a garret seven stories high, you must not betray it in your clothes, according to which you are well or ill looked on. When we are got to Toulouse, we must begin to turn the penny, and we may (if you do not game much) live very cheap—I think that expression will divert you—and now God knows I have not a wish but for your health, comfort, and safe arrival here—write to me every other post, that I may know how you go on—you will be in raptures with your chariot—Mr.

R. a gentleman of fortune, who is going to Italy, and has seen it, has offered me thirty guineas for my bargain. You will wonder all the way, how I am to find room in it for a third—to ease you of this wonder, 'tis by what the coachmakers here call a cave, which is a second bottoin added to that you set your feet upon, which lets the person (who sits over against you) down with his knees to your ancles, and by which you have all more room —and what is more, less heat,—because his head does not intercept the fore-glass—little or nothing —Lyd and I will enjoy this by turns; sometimes I shall take a bidet—(a little post-horse) and scamper before—at other times I shall sit in fresco upon the arm-chair without doors, and one way or other will do very well. I am under infinite obligations to Mr. Thornhill, for accommodating me thus, and so genteelly, for 'tis like making a present of it.—Mr. T—— will send you an order to receive it at Calais—and now, my dear girls, have I forgot any thing?

Adieu! adieu!

Your's most affectionately,

L. STERNE.

A week or ten days will enable you to see every thing—and so long you must stay to rest your bones.

LETTER XXVII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAREST, Paris, June 14, 1762.

HAVING an opportunity of writing by a friend who is setting out this morning for London, I write again, in case the two last letters I have wrote this week to you should be detained by contrary winds at Calais—I have wrote to Mr. E——, by the same hand, to thank him for his kindness to you in the handsomest manner I could—and have told him, his good heart, and his wife's, have made them overlook the trouble of having you at his house, but that if he takes your apartments near him, they will have occasion still enough left to shew their friendsip to us—I have begged him to assist you, and stand by you, as if he was in my place with regard to the sale of the Shandys—and than the copyright—Mark to keep these things distinct in your head—But Becket I have ever found to be a man of probity, and I dare say you will have very little trouble in finishing matters with him—and I would rather wish you to treat with him than with another man—but whoever buys the fifth and sixth volumes of Shandys, must have the nay-say of the seventh and eighth.*— I wish, when you come here, in case the weather is too hot to travel, you could think it pleasant to go to

* Alluding to the first edition

the Spa for four or six weeks, where we should live for half the money we should spend at Paris —after that we should take the sweetest season of the vintage to go to the south of France—but we will put our heads together, and you shall just do as you please in this, and in every thing which depends on me—for I am a being perfectly contented, when others are pleased—to bear and forbear will ever be my maxim—only I fear the heats through a journey of five hundred miles for you and my Lydia, more than for myself.—Do not forget the watch-chains—bring a couple for a gentleman's watch likewise; we shall lie under great obligations to the Abbé M., and must make him such a small acknowledgement; according to my way of flourishing, 'twill be a present worth a kingdom to him—They have bad pins, and vile needles here—bring for yourself, and some for presents—as also a strong bottle-screw, for whatever Scrub we may hire as butler, coachman, &c. to uncork us our Frontiniac—You will find a letter for you at the Lyon d'Argent—Send for your chaise into the court-yard, and see all is right—Buy a chain, at Calais, strong enough not to be cut off, and let your portmanteau be tied on the fore-part of your chaise, for fear of a dog's trick—so God bless you both, and remember me to my Lydia.

I am your's affectionately,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAREST. Paris, June 17, 1762.

PROBABLY you will receive another letter with this by the same post—if so, read this the last—It will be the last you can possibly receive at York, for I hope it will catch you just as you are upon the wing—if that should happen, I suppose in course you have executed the contents of it, in all things which relate to pecuniary matters, and when these are settled to your mind, you will have got through your last difficulty—every thing else will be a step of pleasure, and by the time you have got half-a-dozen stages, you will set up your pipes and sing Te Deum together, as you whisk it along. Desire Mr. C—— to send me a proper letter of attorney by you, he will receive it back by return of post. You have done every thing well with regard to our Sutton and Stillington affairs, and left things in the best channel—if I was not sure you must have long since got my picture, garnets, &c., I would write and scold Mr. T—— abominably—he put them in Becket's hands to be forwarded by the stage-coach to you, as soon as he got to town. I long to hear from you, and that all my letters and things are come safe to you, and then you will say that I have not been a bad lad—for you will find I have been writing continually, as I wished you to do.—Bring your silver coffee-pot, 'twill serve both

to give water, lemonade, and orjead—to say nothing of coffee and chocolate, which, by the bye, is both cheap and good at Toulouse, like other things —I had like to have forgot a most necessary thing, there are no copper tea-kettles to be had in France, and we shall find such a thing the most comfortable utensil in the house—buy a good strong one, which will hold two quarts—a dish of tea will be of comfort to us in our journey south——I have a bronze tea-pot, which we will carry also—as china cannot be brought over from England, we must make up a villanous party-coloured tea-equipage, to regale ourselves, and our English friends, whilst we are at Toulouse—I hope you have got your bill from Becket. There is a good-natured kind of a trader I have just heard of, at Mr. Foley's, who they think will be coming off from England to France, with horses, the latter end of June. He happened to come over with a lady, who is sister to Mr. Foley's partner, and I have got her to write a letter to him in London, this post, to beg he will seek you at Mr. E——'s, and, in case a cartel-ship does not go off before he goes, to take you under his care. He was infinitely friendly, in the same office, last year, to the lady who now writes to him, and nursed her on ship-board, and defended her by land with great good-will. Do not say I forget you, or whatever can be conducive to your ease of mind in this journey—I wish I was with you, to do these offices myself, and to strew roses on your way—but I shall have time and occasion to shew you I am not

wanting—Now, my dears, once more pluck up your spirits—trust in God—in me—and in yourselves—with this, was you put to it, you would encounter all these difficulties ten times told—Write instantly, and tell me you triumph over all fears; tell me Lydia is better, and a helpmate to you—You says she grows like me—let her shew me she does so in her contempt of small dangers; and fighting against the apprehensions of them, which is better still. As I will not have F.'s share of the books, you will inform him so—Give my love to Mr. Fothergill, and to those true friends which envy has spared me—and for the rest, *laissez passer*—You will find I speak French tolerably—but I only wish to be understood. You will soon speak better;—a month's play with a French Demoiselle will make Lyd chatter like a magpye. Mrs. —— understood not a word of it when she got here, and writes me word she begins to prate apace—you will do the same in a fortnight—Dear Bess, I have a thousand wishes, but have a hope for every one of them—you shall chant the same *jubilate*, my dears, so God bless you. My duty to Lydia, which implies my love too. Adieu, believe me

Your affectionate,

L. STERNE.

Memorandum: Bring watch-chains, tea-kettle, knives, cookery-book, &c.

You will smile at this last article—so adieu—At Dover, the Cross Keys; at Calais, the Lyon D'Argent—the master, a Turk in grain.

LETTER XXIX.

TO LADY D.

Paris, July 9, 1762.

I WILL not send your ladyship the trifles you bid me purchase without a line. I am very well pleased with Paris—indeed I meet with so many civilities amongst the people here, that I must sing their praises—the French have a great deal of urbanity in their composition, and to stay a little time amongst them will be agreeable.—I splutter French so as to be understood—but I have had a droll adventure here in which my Latin was of some service to me—I had hired a chaise and a horse to go about seven miles into the country, but, *Shandean-like*, did not take notice that the horse was almost dead when I took him—Before I got half-way, the poor animal dropped down dead—so, I was forced to appear before the Police, and began to tell my story in French, which was, that the poor beast had to do with a worse beast than himself, namely, *his master*, who had driven him all the day before (Jehu-like), and that he had neither had corn or hay, therefore I was not to pay for the horse—but I might as well have whistled, as have spoke French, and I believe my Latin was equal to my uncle Toby's Lillabulero—being not understood because of its purity, but by dint of words I forced my judge to do me justice—no common thing, by the way, in France.—My wife and daughter are arrived—the latter does nothing but

look out of the window, and complain of the torment of being frizzled.—I wish she may ever remain a child of nature—I hate children of art.

I hope this will find your ladyship well—and that you will be kind enough to direct to me at Toulouse, which place I shall set out for very soon. I am, with truth, and sincerity,

Your Ladyship's
Most faithful
L. STERNE.

LETTER XXX.

TO MR. E.

DEAR SIR, Paris, July 12, 1762.

My wife and daughter arrived here safe and sound on Thursday, and are in high raptures with the speed and pleasantness of their journey, and particularly of all they see and meet with here. But in their journey from York to Paris nothing has given them a more sensible and lasting pleasure than the marks of kindness they received from you and Mrs. E.——The friendship, good-will, and politeness of my two friends I never doubted to me or mine, and I return you both all a grateful man is capable of, which is merely my thanks. Have taken, however, the liberty of sending an Indian taffety, which Mrs. E. must do me the honor to wear for my wife's sake, who would have got it made up, but that Mr. Stanhope, the consul

of Algiers, who sets off to-morrow morning for London, has been so kind (I mean his lady) as to take charge of it; and we had but just time to procure it; and had we missed that opportunity, as we should have been obliged to have left it behind us at Paris, we knew not when or how to get it to our friend.—I wish it had been better worth a paragraph. If there is any thing we can buy or procure for you here (intelligence included), you have a right to command me—for I am yours, with my wife and girl's kind love to you and Mrs. E.

LAU. STERNE.

LETTER XXXI.

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

MY DEAR H. Toulouse, August 12, 1762.

By the time you have got to the end of this long letter, you will perceive that I have not been able to answer your last till now—I have had the intention of doing it almost as often as my prayers in my head—'tis thus we use our best friends.—What an infamous story is that you have told me!—After some little remarks on it, the rest of my letter will go on, like silk. **** is a good-natured old easy fool, and has been deceived by the most artful of her sex, and she must have abundance of impudence and charlatanery, to have carried on such a farce. I pity the old man for being taken in for so much money—a man of sense I should have

laughed at.—My wife saw her when in town, and she had not the appearance of poverty; but when she wants to melt ****'s heart, she puts her gold watch and diamond rings in her drawer.—But he might have been aware of her. I could not have been mistaken in her character—and 'tis odd she should talk of her wealth to one, and tell another the reverse—so good-night to her.—About a week or ten days before my wife arrived at Paris, I had the same accident I had at Cambridge, of breaking a vessel in my lungs. It happened in the night, and I bled the bed full, and finding in the morning I was likely to bleed to death, I sent immediately for a surgeon to bleed me at both arms—this saved me, and, with lying speechless for three days, I recovered upon my back in bed; the breach healed, and, in a week after, I got out.—This, with my weakness and hurrying about, made me think it high time to haste to Toulouse.—We have had four months of such heats, that the oldest Frenchman never remembers the like—'twas as hot as *Nebuchadnezzar's oven*, and never has relaxed one hour—in the height of this, 'twas our destiny (or rather destruction) to set out by way of Lyons, Montpellier, &c. to shorten, I trow, our sufferings.—Good God!—but 'tis over—and here I am in my own house, quite settled by M——'s aid, and good-natured offices, for which I owe him more than I can express, or know how to pay at present.—'Tis in the prettiest situation in Toulouse, with near two acres of garden—the house too good by half for us—well furnished, for which I pay thirty

pounds a year.—I have got a good cook—my wife a decent *femme de chambre*, and a good-looking *laquais*.—The Abbé has planned our expences, and set us in such a train, we cannot easily go wrong—though, by the bye, the d——l is seldom found sleeping under a hedge. Mr. Trotter dined with me the day before I left Paris—I took care to see all executed according to your directions—but Trotter, I dare say, by this, has wrote to you—I made him happy beyond expression with your Crazy Tales, and more so with its frontispiece—I am in spirits writing a crazy chapter—with my face turned towards thy turret.—'Tis now I wish all warmer climates, countries, and every thing else, at ——, that separates me from our paternal seat—*ce sera là où reposera ma cendre—et ce sera là où mon cousin viendra repondre les pleurs dues à notre amitié*.—I am taking asses' milk three times a-day, and cows' milk as often—I long to see thy face again once more.—Greet the Colonel kindly in my name, and thank him cordially from me for his many civilities to Madame and Mademoiselle Shandy at York, who send all due acknowledgments. The humour is over for France, and Frenchmen, but that is not enough for your affectionate cousin,

L. S.

(A year will tire us all out, I trow), but thank Heaven the post brings me a letter from my Anthony.—I felicitate you upon what Messrs. the Reviewers allow you—they have too much judg-

ment themselves not to allow you what you are actually possessed of, "talents, wit, and humour." —Well, write on, my dear cousin, and be guided by thy own fancy.—Oh! how I envy you all at Crazy Castle!—I could like to spend a month with you—and should return back again for the vintage. —I honor the man that has given the world an idea of our paternal seat—'tis well done—I look at it ten times a-day with a *quando te aspiciam?*—Now farewell—remember me to my beloved Colonel—greet Panty most lovingly on my behalf, and if Mrs. C——, and Miss C——, *&c.* are at G——, greet them likewise with a holy kiss.—So God bless you.

LETTER XXXII.

TO MR. FOLEY, AT PARIS.

MY DEAR FOLEY, Toulouse, August 14, 1762.

After many turnings (*alias* digressions), to say nothing of downright overthrows, stops, and delays, we have arrived in three weeks at Toulouse, and are now settled in our house, with servants, &c. about us, and look as composed as if we had been here seven years.—In our journey we suffered so much from the heats, it gives me pain to remember it.—I never saw a cloud from Paris to Nismes half as broad as a twenty-four sols piece. —Good God! we were toasted, roasted, grill'd, stew'd, and carbonaded on one side or other all

the way—and being all done enough *(assez cuits)* in the day, we were eat up at night by bugs, and other unswept-out vermin, the legal inhabitants (if length of possession gives right) of every inn we lay at.—Can you conceive a worse accident than that in such journey, in the hottest day and hour of it, four miles from either tree or shrub which could cast a shade of the size of one of Eve's fig-leaves—that we should break a hind wheel into ten thousand pieces, and be oliged in consequence to sit five hours on a gravelly road, without one drop of water, or possibility of getting any?—To mend the matter, my two postillions were two dough-hearted fools, and fell a-crying—Nothing was to be done! By heaven, quoth I, pulling off my coat and waistcoat, something shall be done, for I'll thrash you both within an inch of your lives—and then make you take each of you a horse, and ride like two devils to the next post for a cart to carry my baggage, and a wheel to carry ourselves.—Our luggage weighed ten quintals—'twas the fair of Baucaire—all the world was going or returning—we were asked by every soul who passed by us, if we were going to the fair of Baucaire?—No wonder, quoth I, we have goods enough! *vous avez raison, mes amis.*

Well! here we are after all, my dear friend—and most deliciously placed at the extremity of the town, in an excellent house, well furnish'd, and elegant beyond any thing I look'd for.—'Tis built in the form of a hotel, with a pretty court towards the town—and behind, the best garden in Tou-

louse, laid out in serpentine walks, and so large, that the company in our quarter usually come to walk there in the evenings, for which they have my consent—"the more the merrier."—The house consists of a good *salle à manger* above stairs, joining to the very great *salle à compagnie* as large as the Baron d'Holbach's; three handsome bed-chambers with dressing-rooms to them—below stairs two very good rooms for myself, one to study in, the other to see company.—I have, moreover, cellars round the court, and all other offices—Of the same landlord I have bargained to have the use of a country-house which he has two miles out of town, so that myself and all my family have nothing more to do than to take our hats and remove from the one to the other.——My landlord is, moreover, to keep the gardens in order—and what do you think I am to pay for all this? neither more or less than thirty pounds a-year—all things are cheap in proportion—so we shall live for very little.—I dined yesterday with Mr. H——; he is most pleasantly situated, and they are all well.—As for the books you have received for D——, the bookseller was a fool not to send the bill along with them—I will write to him about it.—I wish you was with me for two months; it would cure you of all evils ghostly and bodily—but this, like many other wishes both for you and myself, must have its completion elsewhere.—Adieu, my kind friend, and believe that I love you as much from inclination as reason, for

I am most truly yours,

L. STERNE.

My wife and girl join in compliments to you—My best respects to my worthy Baron d'Holbach and all that society—Remember me to my friend Mr. Panchaud.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

MY DEAR H. Toulouse, Oct. 19. 1762.

I RECEIVED your letter yesterday—so it has been travelling from Crazy Castle to Toulouse full eighteen days—If I had nothing to stop me I would engage to set out this morning, and knock at Crazy Castle gates in three days less time—by which time I should find you and the Colonel, Panty, &c. all alone—the season I most wish and like to be with you—I rejoice from my heart down to my reins, that you have snatch'd so many happy and sunshiny days out of the hands of the blue devils—If we live to meet and join our forces as heretofore, we will give these gentry a drubbing—and turn them for ever out of their usurped citadel—some legions of them have been put to flight already by your operations this last campaign—and I hope to have a hand in dispersing the remainder the first time my dear cousin sets up his banners again under the square tower——But what art thou meditating with axes and hammers?—"*I know the pride and the naughtiness of thy*

"*heart*," and thou lovest the sweet visions of architraves, friezes, and pediments, with their tympanums, and thou hast found out a pretence, *à raison de cinq cent livres sterling* to be laid out in four years, &c. &c. (so as not to be felt, which is always added by the d——l as a bait) to justify thyself unto thyself—It may be very wise to do this—but 'tis wiser to keep one's money in one's pocket, whilst there are wars without and rumours of wars within. St.—— advises his disciples to sell both coat and waistcoat, and go rather without shirt or sword, than leave no money in their scrip to go to Jerusalem with—Now those *quatre ans consecutifs*, my dear Anthony, are the most precious morsels of thy *life to come* (in this world,) and thou wilt do well to enjoy that morsel without cares, calculations, and curses, and damns, and debts—for as sure as stone is stone, and mortar is mortar, &c. 'twill be one of the many works of thy repentance—But after all, if the Fates have decreed it, as you and I have some time supposed it, on account of your generosity, "*that you are never to be a monied man*," the decree will be fulfilled whether you adorn your castle and line it with cedar, and paint it within side and without side with vermillion, or not *et cele étant* (having a bottle of Frontiniac and glass at my right hand) I drink, dear Anthony, to thy health and happiness, and to the final accomplishment of all thy lunary and sublunary projects.—For six weeks together, after I wrote my last letter to you, my projects were many stories higher, for I

was all that time, as I thought, journeying on to the other world—I fell ill of an epidemic vile fever which killed hundreds about me—The physicians here are the errantest charletans in Europe, or the most ignorant of all pretending fools—I withdrew what was left of me out of their hands, and recommended my affairs entirely to Dame Nature—She (dear goddess) has saved me in fifty different pinching bouts, and I begin to have a kind of enthusiasm now in her favor, and in my own, that one or two more escapes will make me believe I shall leave you all at last by translation, and not by fair death. I am now stout and foolish again as a happy man can wish to be—and am busy playing the fool with my uncle Toby, whom I have got soused over head and ears in love.—I have many hints and projects for other works; all will go on I trust as I wish in this matter.—When I have reaped the benefit of this winter at Toulouse—I cannot see I have any thing more to do with it; therefore after having gone with my wife and girl to Bagnieres, I shall return from whence I came. ——Now my wife wants to stay another year to save money, and this opposition of wishes, though 'twill not be as sour as lemon, yet 'twill not be as sweet as sugar-candy.—I wish T— would lead Sir Charles to Toulouse; 'tis as good as any town in the South of France—for my own part 'tis not to my taste—but I believe, the ground-work of my *ennui* is more to the eternal platitude of the French characters—little variety, no originality in it at all —than to any other cause—for they are very civil

—but civility itself, in that uniform, wearies and bodders one to death—If I do not mind, I shall grow most stupid and sententious—Miss Shandy is hard at it with music, dancing, and French speaking, in the last of which she does *à merveille*, and speaks it with an excellent accent, considering she practises within sight of the Pyrenean mountains.—If the snows will suffer me, I propose to spend two or three months at Barege, or Bagnieres, but my dear wife is against all schemes of additional expences—which wicked propensity (tho' not of despotic power) yet I cannot suffer—tho' by the bye laudable enough—But she may talk—I will do my own way, and she will acquiesce without a word of debate on the subject.—Who can say so much in praise of his wife? Few I trow.—M—— is out of town vintaging—so write to me *Monsieur Sterne, gentilhomme Anglois*—'twill find me—We are as much out of the road of all intelligence here as at the Cape of Good Hope—so write a long nonsensical letter like this, now and then, to me—in which say nothing but what may be shewn, (tho' I love every paragraph and spirited stroke of your pen, others might not,) for you must know, a letter no sooner arrives from England, but curiosity is upon her knees to know the contents ——Adieu, dear H. believe me

Your affectionate

L. STERNE.

We have had bitter cold weather here these fourteen days—which has obliged us to sit with

whole pagells of wood lighted up to our noses—'tis a dear article—but every thing else being extremely cheap, Madame keeps an excellent good house, with *soupe, bouilli, roti*,—&c. &c. for two hundred and fifty pounds a year.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO MR. FOLEY, AT PARIS.

MY DEAR FOLEY, Toulouse, November 9, 1762.

I HAVE have had this week your letter on my table, and hope you will forgive my not answering it sooner—and even to-day I can but write you ten lines, being engaged at Mrs. M—'s. I would not omit one post more acknowledging the favor—In a few posts I will write you a long one gratis, that is for love—Thank you for having done what I desired you—and for the future direct to me under cover at Monsieur Brousse's—I receive all letters through him more punctual and sooner than when left at the post-house—

H———'s family greet you with mine—we are much together, and never forget you—forget me not to the Baron—and all the circle—nor to your domestic circle—

I am got pretty well, and sport much with my uncle Toby in the volume I am now fabricating for the laughing part of the world—for the melancholy part of it, I have nothing but my prayers—

so God help them.—I shall hear from you in a post or two at least after you receive this—in the mean time, dear Foley, adieu, and believe no man wishes or esteems you more than your

L. STERNE.

LETTER XXXV.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR FOLEY, Toulouse, Wednesday, Dec. 3, 1762.

I HAVE for this last fortnight every post-day gone to Messrs. B—— and sons, in expectation of the pleasure of a letter from you with the remittance I desired you to send me here.—When a man has no more than half a dozen guineas in his pocket—and a thousand miles from home—and in a country where he can as soon raise the d—l as a six livre piece to go to market with in case he had changed his last guinea—you will not envy my situation—God bless you—remit me the balance due upon the receipt of this.—We are all at H—'s, practising a play we are to act here this Christmas holidays—all the Dramatis Personæ are of the English, of which we have a happy society living together like brothers and sisters—Your banker here has just sent me word the tea Mr. H. wrote for is to be delivered into my hands—'tis all one into whose hands the treasure falls—we shall pay

Brousse for it the day we get it—We join in our most friendly respects, and believe me, dear Foley, truly yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FOLEY, Toulouse, Dec. 17, 1762.

THE post after I wrote last, I received yours, with the inclosed draught upon the receiver, for which I return you all thanks—I have received this day likewise the box and tea all safe and sound—so we shall all of us be in our cups this Christmas, and drink without fear or stint.—We begin to live extremely happy, and are all together every night—fiddling, laughing and singing, and cracking jokes. You will scarce believe the news I tell you—There is a company of English strollers arrived here, who are to act comedies all the Christmas, and are now busy in making dresses, and preparing some of our best comedies—your wonder will cease when I inform you these strollers are your friends, with the rest of our society, to whom I proposed this scheme *soulagement*—and I assure you we do well.—The next week, with a grand orchestra, we play the Busy Body—and the Journey to London the week after; but I have some thoughts of adapting it to our situation—and making it the Journey to Toulouse, which,

with the change of half-a-dozen scenes, may be easily done.—Thus, my dear F. for want of something better we have recourse to ourselves, and strike out the best amusements we can from such materials.—My kind love and friendship to all my true friends—my service to the rest. H——'s family have just left me, having been this last week with us—, they will be with me all the holidays. —In summer shall visit them, and so balance hospitalities.

Adieu,

Yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR FOLEY, Toulouse, March 29, 1763.

—THOUGH that's a mistake! I mean the date of the place, for I write at Mr. H—'s in the country, and have been there with my people all the week—" How does Tristram do?" you say in yours to him—faith but so so—the worst of human maladies is poverty—though that is a second lie—for poverty of spirit is worse than poverty of purse by ten thousand per cent.—I inclose you a remedy for the one, a draught of a hundred and thirty pounds, for which I insist upon a rescription by the very return—or I will send you and all your commissaries to the d——l. —I do not hear they

have tasted of one fleshy banquet all this Lent—you will make an excellent *grillé*, P— they can make nothing of him but *bouillon*—I mean my other two friends no ill—so shall send them a reprieve as they acted out of necessity—not choice—My kind respects to Baron d'Holbach, and all his household—Say all that's kind for me to my other friends—you know how much, dear Foley, I am yours,

L. STERNE.

I have not five Louis to vapour with in this land of coxcombs—My wife's compliments.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR FOLEY, Toulouse, April 18, 1763.

I THANK you for your punctuality in sending me the rescription, and for your box by the courier, which came safe by last post.—I was not surprised much with your account of Lord***** being obliged to give way—and for the rest, all follows in course.—I suppose you will endeavour to fish and catch something for yourself in these troubled waters—at least I wish you all a reasonable man can wish for himself—which is wishing enough for you—all the rest is in the brain—Mr. Woodhouse (whom you know) is also here—he is a most amiable worthy man, and I have the pleasure of having him

much with me—in a short time he proceeds to Italy. The first week in June, I decamp like a patriarch with my whole household, to pitch our tents for three months at the foot of the Pyrenean Hills at Bagnieres, where I expect much health and much amusement from the concourse of adventurers from all corners of the earth.—Mrs. M—— sets out at the same time, for another part of the Pyrenean Hills at Courtray—from whence to Italy—This is the general plan of operation here—except that I have some thoughts of spending the winter at Florence, and crossing over with my family to Leghorn by water—and in April of returning by way of Paris home—but this a sketch only, for in all things I am governed by circumstances—so that what is fit to be done on Monday, may be very unwise on Saturday—On all days of the week, believe me yours,

With unfeigned truth,

L. STERNE.

P. S. All compliments to my Parisian friends.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FOLEY, Toulouse, April 29, 1763.

LAST post my agent wrote me word he would send up from York a bill for fourscore guineas,

with orders to be paid into Mr. Selwin's hands for me. This he said he would expedite immediately, so 'tis possible you may have had advice of it—and 'tis possible also the money may not be paid this fortnight; therefore, as I set out for Bagnieres in that time, be so good as to give me credit for the money for a few posts or so, and send me either a rescription for the money, or a draught for it—at the receipt of which, we shall decamp for ten or twelve weeks—You will receive twenty pounds more on my account, which send also—So much for that—as for pleasure—you have it all amongst you at Paris—we have nothing here which deserves the name—I shall scarce be tempted to sojourn another winter in Toulouse—for I cannot say it suits my health as I hoped—'tis too moist—and I cannot keep clear of agues here—so that if I stay the next winter on this side of the water—'twill be either at Nice or Florence—and I shall return England in April—Wherever I am, believe me, dear Foley, that I am,

Yours faithfully,

L. STERNE.

Madame and Mademoiselle present their best compliments—Remember me to all I regard, particularly Messrs. Panchaud and the rest of your *household.*

LETTER XL.

TO THE SAME.

Toulouse, May 21, 1763.

I TOOK the liberty, three weeks ago, to desire you would be so kind as to send me fourscore pounds, having received a letter the same post, from my agent, that he would order the money to be paid to your correspondent in London in a fortnight. It is some disappointment to me that you have taken no notice of my letter, especially as I told you we waited for the money before we set out for Bagnieres—and so little distrust had I that such a civility would be refused me, that we have actually had all our things packed up these eight days, in hourly expectation of receiving a letter. Perhaps my good friend has waited till he heard the money was paid in London—but you might have trusted to my honor—that all the cash in your iron box (and all the bankers in Europe put together) could not have tempted me to say the thing *that is not.* I hope before this you will have received an account of the money being paid in London—But it would have been taken kindly, if you had wrote me word you would transmit me the money when you had received it, but no sooner!—for Mr. R— of Montpellier, though I know him not, yet knows enough of me to have given me credit for a fortnight for ten times the sum. I am, dear F—, your friend,

and hearty well-wisher,

L. STERNE.

I saw the family of the H——— yesterday, and asked them if you was in the land of the living—they said yea—for they had just received a letter from you. After all, I heartily forgive you—for you have done me a signal service in mortifying me, and it is this, I am determined to grow rich upon it.

Adieu, and God send you wealth and happiness —All compliments to ——. Before April next I am obliged to revisit your metropolis in my way to England.

LETTER XLI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FOLEY, Toulouse, June 9, 1763.

I THIS moment received yours—consequently the moment I got it I sat down to answer it—So much for a logical inference.

Now believe me I had never wrote you so testy a letter, had I not both loved and esteemed you—and it was merely in vindication of the rights of friendship that I wrote in a way as if I was hurt—for neglect me in your heart I knew you could not, without cause; which my heart told me I never had—or will ever give you:—I was the best friends with you that ever I was in my life, before my letter got a league, and pleaded the true excuse for my friend, "That he was oppressed with a multitude of business." Go on, my dear F., and

have but that excuse (so much do I regard your interest), that I would be content to suffer a *real evil* without future murmuring—but in truth, my disappointment was partly chimerical at the bottom, having a letter of credit for two hundred pounds from a person I never saw, by me—but which, out of nicety of temper, I would not make any use of—I set out in two days for Bagnieres, but direct to me to Brousse, who will forward all my letters. Dear F—, adieu. Believe me

Yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XLII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR FOLEY, Toulouse, June 12, 1763.

LUCKILY just before I was stepping into my chaise for Bagnieres, has a strayed fifty pound bill found its way to me; so I have sent it to its lawful owner inclosed—My noodle of an agent, instead of getting Mr. Selwin to advise you he had received the money (which would have been enough) has got a bill for it, and sent it rambling to the furthest part of France after me; and if it had not caught me just now, it might have followed me into Spain, for I shall cross the Pyreneans, and spend a week in that kingdom, which is enough for a fertile brain to write a volume upon—When

I write the history of my travels—Memorandum! I am not to forget how honest a man I have for a banker at Paris—But, my dear friend, when you say you dare trust me for what little occasions I may have, you have as much faith as honesty—and more of both than of good policy. I thank you, however, ten thousand times—and except such liberty as I have lately taken with you—and that too at a pinch—I say beyond that I will not trespass upon your good-nature or friendliness, to serve me. God bless you, dear F—,

I am yours whilst

L. STERNE.

LETTER XLIII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR FOLEY, Montpellier, Oct. 5, 1763.

I AM ashamed I have not taken an opportunity of thanking you before now, for your friendly act of civility, in ordering Brousse, your correspondent at Toulouse, in case I should have occasion, to pay me fifteen hundred livres—which, as I knew the offer came from your heart, I made no difficulty of accepting. In my way through Toulouse to Marseilles, where we have been, but neither liking the place nor Aix (particularly the latter, it being a parliament town, of which Toulouse has given me a surfeit), we have returned here where we shall reside the winter—My wife and daughter

purpose to stay a year at least behind me, and when winter is over, to return to Toulouse, or go to Montauban, where they will stay till they return, or I fetch them—For myself, I shall set out in February for England, where my heart has been fled these six months—but I shall stay a fortnight with my friends at Paris; though I verily believe, if it was not for the pleasure of seeing and chattering with you, I should pass on directly to Brussels, and so on to Rotterdam, for the sake of seeing Holland, and embark from thence to London—But I must stay a little with those I love and have so many reasons to regard—you cannot place too much of this to your own score. I have had an offer of going to Italy a fortnight ago—but I must like my subject as well as the terms, neither of which were to my mind. Pray what English have you at Paris? where is my young friend Mr. F—? We hear of three or four English families coming to us here—If I can be serviceable to any you would serve, you have but to write. Mr. H—— has sent my friend W—'s picture—You have seen the original, or I would have sent it you—I believe I shall beg leave to get a copy of my own from yours, when I come in *propria persona*—till when, God bless you, my dear friend, and believe me

Most faithfully yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XLIV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Montpellier, Jan. 5, 1764.

You see I cannot pass over the fifth of the month without thinking of you, and writing to you. The last is a periodical habit—the first is from my heart, and I do it oftener than I remember—however, from both motives together, I maintain I have a right to the pleasure of a single line—be it only to tell me how your watch goes—You know how much happier it would make me to know that all things belonging to you went on well.—You are going to have them all to yourself (I hear), and that Mr. S—— is true to his first intention of leaving business.—I hope this will enable you to accomplish yours in a shorter time, that you may get to your long-wished-for retreat of tranquillity and silence.—When you have got to your fire-side, and into your arm-chair (and, by the bye, have another to spare for a friend), and are so much a sovereign as to sit in your furred cap, if you like it, though I should not (for a man's ideas are at least the cleaner for being dressed decently), why then it will be a miracle if I do not glide in like a ghost upon you, and in a very unghost-like fashion help you off with a bottle of your best wine.

January 15.—It does not happen every day that a letter begun in the most perfect health, should

be concluded in the greatest weakness—I wish the vulgar high and low do not say it was a judgment upon me, for taking all this liberty with *ghosts*.—Be it as it may—I took a ride, when the first part of this was wrote, towards Perenas—and returned home in a shivering fit, though I ought to have been in a fever, for I had tired my beast; and he was as immoveable as Don Quixotte's wooden horse, and my arm was half dislocated in whipping him.—This, quoth I, is inhuman.—No, says a peasant on foot behind me, I'll drive him home—so he laid on his posteriors, but 'twas needless—as his face was turned towards Montpellier, he began to trot.—But to return; this fever has confined me ten days in my bed—I have suffered in this scuffle with death terribly—but unless the spirit of prophecy deceive me—I shall not die but live—in the mean time, dear F., let us live as merrily, but *as innocently* as we can.—It has ever been as good, if not better than a bishopric to me—and *I desire no other*.—Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me yours,

L. S.

Please to give the inclosed to Mr. T——, and tell him I thank him cordially from my heart for his great *good-will*.

LETTER XLV

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Montpellier, Jan. 20, [1764.]

HEARING by Lord Rochford (who in passing through here in his way to Madrid has given me a call), that my worthy friend Mr. Fox was now at Paris—I have inclosed a letter to him, which you will present in course, or direct to him.—I suppose you are full of English; but, in short, we are here as if in another world, where unless some stray'd soul arrives, we know nothing of what is going on in yours.—Lord G——r, I suppose, is gone from Paris, or I had wrote also to him. I know you are as busy as a bee, and have few moments to yourself—nevertheless bestow one of them upon an old friend, and write me a line—and if Mr. F. is too idle, and has ought to say to me, pray write a second line for him.—We had a letter from Miss P—— this week, who it seems has decamp'd for ever from Paris—*All is for the best*—which is my general reflection upon many things in this world. —Well! I shall shortly come and shake you by the hand in St. Sauveur—if still you are there.—My wife returns to Toulouse, and purposes to spend the summer at Bagnieres—I, on the contrary, go and visit my wife, the church in Yorkshire.—We all live the longer—at least the happier, for having things our own way.—This is my con-

jugal maxim—I own 'tis not the best of maxims—but I maintain 'tis not the worst.—Adieu, dear F——, and believe me,

Yours, with truth,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XLVI.

TO MRS. F——.

Montpellier, Feb. 1, 1764.

I AM preparing, my dear Mrs. F., to leave France, for I am heartily tired of it—That insipidity there is in French characters has disgusted your friend Yorick. I have been dangerously ill, and cannot think that the sharp air of Montpellier has been of service to me—and so my physicians told me when they had me under their hands for above a month—If you stay any longer here, Sir, it will be fatal to you.—And why, good people, were you not kind enough to tell me this sooner?—After having discharged them, I told Mrs. Sterne that I should set out for England very soon; but as she chooses to remain in France for two or three years, I have no objection, except that I wish my girl in England.—The states of Languedoc are met—'tis a fine raree-show, with the usual accompaniments of fiddles, bears, and puppet-shows.—I believe I shall step into my post-chaise with more alacrity to fly from these sights, than a Frenchman would to fly to them—and except a tear at parting with

my little slut, I shall be in high spirits, and every step I take that brings me nearer England; will, I think, help to set this poor frame to rights. Now pray write to me, directed to Mr. F. at Paris, and tell me what I am to bring you over.—How do I long to greet all my friends! few do I value more than yourself.—My wife chooses to go to Montauban, rather than stay here, in which I am truly passive. If this should not find you at Bath, I hope it will be forwarded to you, as I wish to fulfil your commissions—and so adieu.—Accept every warm wish for your health, and believe me ever yours,

L. STERNE.

P. S. My physicians have almost poisoned me with what they call *bouillons refraichissants*—'tis a cock flayed alive and boiled with poppy-seeds, then pounded in a mortar, afterwards passed thro' a sieve—There is to be one craw-fish in it, and I was gravely told it must be a male one—a female would do me more hurt than good.

LETTER XLVII.

TO MISS STERNE.

MY DEAR LYDIA, Paris, May 15, 1764.

By this time I suppose your mother and self are fixed at Montauban, and I therefore direct to your

banker, to be delivered to you.—I acquiesced in your staying in France—likewise it was your mother's wish—but I must tell you both (that unless your health had not been a plea made use of) I should have wished you both to return with me.—I have sent you the Spectators, and other books, particularly Metastasio; but I beg my girl to read the former, and only make the latter her amusement.—I hope you have not forgot my last request, to make no friendships with the French women—not that I think ill of them all, but sometimes women of the best principles are the most *insinuating*—nay, I am so jealous of you, that I should be miserable were I to see you had the least grain of coquetry in your composition.—You have enough to do—for I have also sent you a guitar—and as you have no genius for drawing (though you never could be made to believe it), pray waste not your time about it.—Remember to write to me as to a friend—in short, whatever comes into your little head, and then it will be natural.—If your mother's rheumatism continues, and she chooses to go to Bagnieres, tell her not to be stopped for want of money, for my purse shall be as open as my heart. I have preached at the Ambassador's chapel—Hezekiah*—(an odd subject your mother will say)—There was a concourse of all nations, and religions too.—I shall leave Paris in a few days—I am lodged in the same hotel with Mr. T——; they are good and generous souls.—Tell your mother

* See SERMON XVII.

that I hope she will write to me, and that when she does so, I may also receive a letter from my Lydia.

Kiss your mother from me, and believe me

Your affectionate

L. STERNE.

LETTER XLVIII.

TO MR. FOLEY.

MY DEAR FOLEY, York, August 6, 1764.

THERE is a young lady with whom I have sent a letter to you, who will arrive at Paris in her way to Italy—her name is Miss Tuting; a lady known and loved by the whole kingdom—if you can be of any aid to her in your advice, &c. as to her journey, &c. your good-nature and politeness I am sure need no spur from me to do it.—I was sorry we were like the two buckets of a well, whilst in London, for we were never able to be both resident together the month I continued in and about the environs.——If I get a cough this winter which holds me three days, you will certainly see me at Paris the week following, for now I abandon every thing in this world to health and to my friends—for the last sermon that I shall ever preach, was preach'd at Paris—so I am altogether an idle man, or rather a free one, which is better. I sent, last post, twenty pounds to Mrs. Sterne, which makes a hundred pounds remitted since I

got here.—You must pay yourself what I owe you out of it—and place the rest to account.—Betwixt this and Lady-day next, Mrs. Sterne will draw from time to time upon you to about the amount of a hundred louis—but not more (I think)—I having left her a hundred in her pocket.—But you shall always have money before-hand of mine, and she purposes to spend no further than five thousand livres in the year—but twenty pounds this way or that makes no difference between us.—Give my kindest compliments to Mr. P——. I have a thousand things to say to you, and would go half-way to Paris to tell them in your ear.—The Messrs. T——, H——, &c. and many more of your friends with whom I am now, send their service—Mine to all friends.—Yours, dear F., most truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XLIX.

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

September 4, 1764.

Now, my dear, dear Anthony—I do not think a week or ten days playing the good fellow (at this very time) at Scarborough, so abominable a thing—but if a man could get there cleverly, and every soul in his house in the mind to try what could be done in furtherance thereof.—I have no one to consult in this affair—therefore as a man may do worse things, the English of all which is this, that

I am going to leave a few poor sheep here in the wilderness for fourteen days—and from pride and naughtiness of heart to go see what is doing at Scarborough—Steadfastly meaning afterwards to lead a new life and strengthen my faith.—Now some folks say there is much company there—and some say not—and I believe there is neither the one or the other—but will be both, if the world will have but a month's patience or so.—No, my dear H——, I did not delay sending your letter directly to the post.—As there are critical times, or rather turns and revolutions in *** humours, I know not what the delay of an hour might hazard—I will answer for him, he has seventy times seven forgiven you —and as often wish'd you at the d——l.—After many oscillations the pendulum will rest firm as ever.—

I send all kind compliments to Sir C. D—— and G——s. I love them from my soul.—If G——t is with you, him also.—I go on, not rapidly, but well enough, with my uncle Toby's amours.—There is no sitting, and cudgelling one's brains whilst the sun shines bright—'twill be all over in six or seven weeks, and there are dismal months enow after to endure suffocation by a brimstone fire-side.—If you can get to Scarborough do.—A man who makes six tons of alum a-week, may do any thing.—Lord Granby is to be there—what a temptation!

Yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

LETTER L.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR COUSIN, Coxwould—Thursday. [*Sept.* 1764.]

I AM but this moment returned from Scarborough, where I have been drinking the waters ever since the races, and have received marvellous strength, had I not debilitated it as fast as I got it, by playing the good-fellow with Lord Granby and Co. too much. I rejoice you have been encamp'd at Harrowgate, from which, by now, I suppose you are decamp'd—otherwise as idle a beast as I have been, I would have sacrificed a few days to the God of laughter with you and your jolly set.—I have done nothing good that I know of, since I left you, except paying off your guinea and a half to K——, in my way thro' York hither—I must try now and do better—Go on and prosper for a month.

Your affectionate,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LI.

TO MR. FOLEY, AT PARIS.

MY DEAR FRIEND, York, Sept. 29, 1764.

I HAVING just had the honor of a letter from Miss Tuting, full of the acknowledgments of your

attention and kind services to her, I will not believe these arose from the D. of A——'s letters, nor mine. Surely *she needed no recommendation*—the truest and most honest compliment I can pay you is to say they came from your own good heart, only you was introduced to the object—for the rest followed in course—However let me cast in my mite of thanks to the treasury which belongs to good-natured actions. I have been with Lord G—y these three weeks at Scarborough—the pleasures of which I found somewhat more exalted than those of Bagnieres last year. I am now returned to my Philosophical Hut to finish Tristram, which I calculate will be ready for the world about Christmas, at which time I decamp from hence, and fix my head-quarters at London for the winter—unlesss my cough pushes me forwards to your metropolis—or that I can persuade some *gros* my Lord to take a trip to you—I'll try if I can make him relish the joys of the *Thuilleries, Opera Comique, &c.*

I had this week a letter from Mrs. Sterne from Montauban, in which she tells me she has occasion for fifty pounds immediately—Will you send an order to your correspondent at Montauban to pay her so much cash—and I will in three weeks send as much to Becket—But as her purse is low, for GOD'S sake write directly. Now you must do something equally essential—to rectify a mistake in the mind of your correspondent there, who it seems gave her a hint not long ago, "*that she was "separated from me for life*"—Now as this is

not true in the first place, and may give a disadvantageous impression of her to those she lives amongst—'twould be unmerciful to let her, or my daughter, suffer by it;—so do be so good as to undeceive him—for in a year or two she proposes (and indeed I expect it with impatience from her) to join me—and tell them I have all the confidence in the world she will not spend more than I can afford, and I only mentioned two hundred guineas a year—because 'twas right to name some certain sum, for which I begged you to give her credit.—I write to you of all my most intimate concerns, as to a brother: so excuse me, dear Foley. God bless you—Believe me

Yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

Compliments to Mr. Panchaud, D'Holbach, &c.

LETTER LII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND, York, Nov. 11, 1764.

I SENT ten days ago, a bank bill of thirty pounds to Mr. Becket, and this post one of sixty—When I get to London, which will be in five weeks, you will receive what shall always keep you in bank for Mrs. Sterne; in the mean time I have desired Becket to send you fourscore pounds, and if my wife, before I get to London, should have occasion

for fifty louis, let her not wait a minute, and if I have not paid it, a week or fortnight I know will break no squares with a good and worthy friend. I will contrive to send you these two new volumes of Tristram, as soon as ever I get them from the press. You will read as odd a tour through France as ever was projected or executed by traveller, or travel-writers, since the world began.—'Tis a laughing good-tempered satire against travelling (as *puppies* travel)—Panchaud will enjoy it—I am quite civil to your Parisians—*et pour cause* you know—'tis likely I may see them in spring—Is it possible for you to get me over a copy of my picture any how? If so, I would write to Mademoiselle N—— to make as good a copy from it as she possibly could—with a view to do her service here—and I would remit her the price—I really believe it would be the parent of a dozen portraits to her, if she executes it with the spirit of the original in your hands—for it will be seen by many—and as my phiz is as remarkable as myself, if she preserves the true character of both, it will do her honor and service too. Write me a line about this, and tell me you are well and happy—Will you present my kind respects to the worthy Baron—I shall send him one of the best impressions of my picture from Mr. Reynolds's—another to Monsieur P——. My love to Mr. S——n and P——d.

I am most truly yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LIII.

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

DEAR, DEAR COUSIN, Nov. 13, 1764.

'Tis a church militant week with me, full of marches, and counter-marches—and treaties about Stillington common, which we are going to inclose —otherwise I would have obeyed your summons —and yet I could not well have done it this week, neither having received a letter ftom C—, who has been very ill; and is coming down to stay a week or ten days with me—Now I know he is ambitious of being better acquainted with you; and longs from his soul for a sight of you in your own castle. I cannot do otherwise than bring him with me—nor can I gallop away and leave him in an empty house to pay a visit to from London, as he comes half express to see me.—I thank you for the care of my northern vintage—I fear after all I must give it a fermentation on the other side of the Alps, which is better than being on the lees with it—but *nous verrons*—yet I fear, as it has got such hold of my brain, and comes upon it like an armed man at nights—I must give way for quietness sake, or be hag-ridden with the conceit of it all my life long—I have been *Miss-ridden* this last week by a couple of romping girls *(bien mises et comme il faut)* who might as well have been in the house with me (though perhaps not, my retreat here is too quiet for them), but they have taken up all my time;

and have given my judgment and fancy more airings than they wanted. These things accord not well with sermon-making—but 'tis my vile errantry, as Sancho says, and that is all that can be made of it. I trust all goes swimmingly on with your alum; that the works amuse you, and call you twice out (at least) a day. I shall see them I trust in ten days or thereabouts—If it was any way possible, I I would set out this moment, though I have no cavalry—*(except a she-ass)*. Give all friendly respects to Mrs. C. and to Col. H—'s, and the garrison both of Guisbro and Skelton. I am, dear Anthony,

Affectionately yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LIV.

TO MR. FOLEY, AT P.

MY DEAR FRIEND, York, Nov. 16, 1764.

THREE posts before I had the favor of yours (which is come to hand this moment) I had wrote to set Mrs. Sterne right in her mistake—That you had any money of mine in your hands—being very sensible that the hundred pounds I had sent you, through Becket's hands, was but about what would balance with you—The reason of her error was owing to my writing her word, I would send you a bill in a post or two for fifty pounds, which, my

finances falling short just then, I deferred—so that I had paid nothing to any one—but was, however, come to York this day, and I have sent you a draught for a hundred pounds—in honest truth, a fortnight ago I had not the cash—but I am as honest as the king (as Sancho Panca says), *only not so rich.*

Therefore if Mrs. Sterne should want thirty louis more, let her have them—and I will balance all (which will not be much) with honor at Christmas, when I shall be in London, having now just finished my two volumes of Tristram. I have some thoughts of going to Italy this year—at least I shall not defer it above another.——I have been with Lord Granby, and with Lord Shelburne, but am now sat down till December in my sweet retirement. I wish you was sat down as happily, and as free of all worldly cares——In a few years, my dear F., I hope to see you a real country gentleman, though not altogether exiled from your friends in London—there I shall spend every winter of my life, in the same lap of contentment, where I enjoy myself now—and wherever I go—we must bring three parts in four of the treat along with us—In short, we must be happy within—and then few things without us make much difference—This is my Shandean philosophy. You will read a comic account of my journey from Calais, through Paris, to the Geronne, in these volumes—my friends tell me they are done with spirit——it must speak for itself. Give my kind respects to Mr. Selwin and

my friend Panchaud——When you see Baron d'Holbach, present him my respects, and believe me, dear F,,

Yours cordially,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LV.

TO DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

DEAR GARRICK, London, March 16, 1765.

THREATENED you with a letter in one I wrote a few weeks ago to Foley, but (to my shame be it spoken) I lead such a life of dissipation I have never had a moment to myself which has not been broke in upon, by one engagement or impertinence or another—and as plots thicken towards the latter end of a piece, I find, unless I take pen and ink just now, I shall not be able to do it, till either I am got into the country, or you to the city. You are teized and tormented too much by your correspondents to return to us, and with accounts how much your friends, and how much your Theatre wants you—so that I will not magnify either our loss or yours—but hope cordially to see you soon.—Since I wrote last I have frequently stept into your house—that is, as frequently as I could take the whole party where I dined along with me—This was but justice to you, as I walked in as a wit—but with regard to myself, I balanced the account thus—I am sometimes in my friend

——'s house, but he is always in Tristram Shandy's—where my friends say he will continue (and I hope the prophecy true for my own immortality), even when he himself is no more.

I have had a lucrative winter's campaign here—Shandy sells well—I am taxing the public with two more volumes of Sermons, which will more than double the gains of Shandy—It goes into the world with a prancing list *de toute la noblesse*—which will bring me in three hundred pounds, exclusive of the sale of the copy—so that with all the contempt of money which *ma façon de penser* has ever impressed on me, I shall be rich in spite of myself: but I scorn, you must know, in the high *ton* I take at present, to pocket all this trash—I set out to lay a portion of it out in the service of the world, in a tour round Italy, where I shall spring game or the deuce is in the dice.—In the beginning of September I quit England, that I may avail myself of the time of vintage, when all nature is joyous, and so saunter philosophically for a year or so, on the other side the Alps.—I hope your pilgrimages have brought Mrs. Garrick and yourself back *à la fleur de jeunesse*—May you both long feel the sweets of it, and your friends with you—Do, dear friend, make my kindest wishes and compliments acceptable to the best and wisest of the daughters of Eve—You shall ever believe, and ever find me affectionately yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LVI.

TO THE SAME.

Bath, April 6, 1765.

I SCALP you! my dear Garrick! my dear friend! foul befal the man who hurts a hair of your head! and so full was I of that very sentiment, that my letter had not been put into the post-office ten minutes, before my heart smote me; and I sent to recal it—but failed—you are sadly to blame, Shandy! for this, quoth I, leaning with my head on my hand, as I recriminated upon my false delicacy in the affair—Garrick's nerves (if he has any left) are as fine and delicately spun as thy own—his sentiments as honest and friendly—thou knowest, Shandy, that he loves thee—why wilt thou hazard him a moment's pain? Puppy! fool, coxcomb, jack-ass, &c. &c.—and so I balanced the account to your favor, before I received it drawn up in *your way*—I say *your way*—for it is not stated so much to your honor and credit, as I had passed the account before—for it was a most lamented truth that I never received one of the letters your friendship meant me, except whilst in Paris.—Oh! how I congratulate you for the anxiety the world has, and continues to be under for your return—Return, return, to the few who love you, and the thousands who admire you.—The moment you set your foot upon yon stage—mark!

I tell it you—by some magic irresisted power, every fibre about your heart will vibrate afresh, and as strong and feelingly as ever—Nature, with glory at her back, will light up the torch within you—and there is enough of it left to heat and enlighten the world these many, many, many years.

Heaven be praised! (I utter it from my soul) that your lady, and my Minerva, is in a condition to walk to Windsor—full rapturously will I lead the graceful pilgrim to the temple, where I will sacrifice with the purest incense to her—but you may worship with me, or not—'twill make no difference either in the truth or warmth of my devotion—still (after all I have seen) I still maintain her peerless.

Powel! good Heaven! give me some one with less smoke and more fire.—There are who, like the Pharisees, still think they shall be heard for *much* speaking—Come—come away, my dear Garrick, and teach us another lesson.

Adieu!—I love you dearly—and your lady better—not hobbyhorsically—but most sentimentally and affectionately—for I am yours (that is, if you never say another word about ——) with all the sentiments of love and friendship you deserve from me,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LVII.

TO MR. FOLEY.

MY DEAR FOLEY, Bath, April 15, 1765.

My wife tells me she has drawn for one hundred pounds, and 'tis fit that you should be paid it that minute—the money is now in Becket's hands—send me, my dear Foley, my account, that I may discharge the balance to this time, and know what to leave in your hands—I have made a good campaign of it this year in the field of the literati—my two volumes of Tristram, and two of Sermons, which I shall print very soon, will bring me a considerable sum.—Almost all the nobility in England honor me with their names, and 'tis thought it will be the largest and most splendid list which ever pranced before a book, since subscriptions came into fashion.—Pray present my most sincere compliments to Lady H——, whose name I hope to insert with many others.—As so many men of genius favor me with their names also, I will quarrel with Mr. Hume, and call him Deist, and what not, unless I have his name too.—My love to Lord W——. Your name, Foley, I have put in as a free-will offering of my labours—your list of subscribers you will send—'tis but a crown for sixteen sermons —Dog cheap! but I am in quest of honor not money.—Adieu, adieu,—believe me, dear Foley,

Yours truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LVIII.

TO MR. W.

Coxwould, May 23, 1765.

At this moment I am sitting in my summer-house with my head and heart full, not of my Uncle Toby's amours with the Widow Wadman, but my Sermons—and your letter has drawn me out of a pensive mood—the spirit of it *pleaseth me*—but in this solitude, what can I tell or write to you but about myself?—I am glad that you are in love—'twill cure you at least of the spleen, which has a bad effect on both man and woman—I myself must ever have some Dulcinea in my head—it harmonizes the soul—and in those cases I first endeavour to make the lady believe so, or rather I begin first to make myself believe that I am in love—but I carry on my affairs quite in the French way, sentimentally—"*l'amour*," (say they) "*n'est rien* "*sans sentiment.*"—Now notwithstanding they make such a pother about the *word*, they have no precise idea annex'd to it—And so much for that same subject called love.—I must tell you how I have just treated a French gentleman of fortune in France, who took a liking to my daughter.—Without any ceremony (having got my direction from my wife's banker) he wrote me word that he was in love with my daughter, and desired to know what *fortune* I would give her at present, and how

much at my *death*—by the bye, I think there was very little *sentiment* on *his side*.—My answer was, "Sir, I shall give her ten thousand pounds on the "day of marriage—my calculation is as follows— "she is not eighteen, you are sixty-two—there "goes five thousand pounds—then, Sir, you at "least think her not ugly—she has many accom- "plishments, speaks Italian, French, plays upon "the guitar, and as I fear you play upon no in- "strument whatever, I think you will be happy to "take her at my terms, for here finishes the ac- "count of the ten thousand pounds."—I do not suppose but he will take this as I mean, that is, a flat refusal.—I have had a parsonage-house burnt down by the carelessness of my curate's wife—as soon as I can I must rebuild it, I trow—but I lack the means at present—yet I am never happier than when I have not a shilling in my pocket—for when I have I can never call it my own.—Adieu, my dear friend—may you enjoy better health than me, though not better spirits, for that is impossible.

Yours sincerely,

L. STERNE.

My compliments to the Colonel.

LETTER LIX.

TO MR. FOLEY, AT PARIS.

MY DEAR SIR, York, July 13, 1765.

I WROTE some time in spring, to beg you would favor me with my account. I believe you was set out from Paris, and that Mr. Garrick brought the letter with him—which possibly he gave you. In the hurry of your business you might forget the contents of it; and in the hurry of mine in town (though I called once) I could not get to see you. I decamp for Italy in September, and shall see your face at Paris, you may be sure—but I shall see it with more pleasure when I am out of debt, which is your own fault, for Becket has had money left in his hands for that purpose.—Do send Mrs. Sterne her two last volumes of Tristram; they arrived with yours in Spring, and she complains she has not got them—My best services to Mr. Panchaud.—I am busy composing two volumes of Sermons—they will be printed in September, though I fear not time enough to bring them with me. Your name is amongst the list of a few of my honorary subscribers—who subscribe for love. —If you see Baron d'Holbach, and Diderot, present my respects to them—If the Baron wants any English books he will let me know, and I will bring them with me.—Adieu.

I am truly yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LX.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, London, October 7, 1765.

It is a terrible thing to be in Paris without a perriwig on a man's head! In seven days from the date of this, I should be in that case, unless you tell your neighbour Madame Requiere to get her *bon mari de me faire un peruque à bourse, au mieux—c'est-à-dire—une la plus extraordinaire—la plus jolie—la plus gentille—et la plus—*

—Mais qu'importe? j'ai l'honneur d'être grand critique—et bien difficile encore dans les affaires de peruques—and in one word, that he gets it done in five days after notice.—

I beg pardon for this liberty, my dear friend, and for the trouble of forwarding this by the very next post.—If my friend Mr. F. is in Paris, my kind love to him, and respects to all others—in sad haste—

Yours truly,

L. STERNE.

I have paid into Mr. Becket's hands six hundred pounds, which you may draw upon at sight, according as either Mrs. Sterne or myself make it expedient.

LETTER LXI.

TO MR. PANCHAUD, AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR, Beau Point Voisin, November 7, 1765.

I FORGOT to desire you to forward whatever letters came to your hand to your banker at Rome, to wait for me against I get there, as it is uncertain how long I may stay at Turin, &c. &c. at present I am held prisoner in this town by the sudden swelling of two pitiful rivulets from the snows melting on the Alps—so that we cannot either advance to them, or retire back again to Lyons—for how long the gentlemen who are my fellow-travellers, and myself, shall languish in this state of vexatious captivity, heaven and earth surely know; for it rains as if they were coming together to settle the matter.—I had an agreeable journey to Lyons, and a joyous time there; dining and supping every day at the commandant's—Lord F. W. I left there, and about a dozen English.—If you see Lord Ossory, Lord William Gordon, and my friend Mr. Crawford, remember me to them—if Wilkes is at Paris yet, I send him all kind wishes—present my compliments as well as thanks to my good friend Miss P——, and believe me, dear Sir, with all truth, yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, Turin, Nov. 15, 1765.

After many difficulties I have got here safe and sound—tho' eight days in passing the mountains of Savoy. I am stopped here for ten days by the whole country betwixt here and Milan being laid under water by continual rains—but I am very happy, and have found my way into a dozen houses already—To-morrow I am to be presented to the King, and when that ceremony is over, I shall have my hands full of engagements—No English here but Sir James Macdonald, who meets with much respect, and Mr. Ogilby. We are altogether, and shall depart in peace together ——My kind services to all, pray forward the inclosed—

Yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXIII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, Turin, Nov. 28, 1765.

I am just leaving this place with Sir James Macdonald for Milan, &c. We have spent a joyous fortnight here, and met with all kinds of

honors—and with regret do we both bid adieu—but health on my side—and good sense on his—say 'tis better to be at Rome—you say at Paris—but you put variety out of the question—I intreat you to forward the inclosed to Mrs. Sterne—My compliments to all friends, more particularly to those I most value (that incudes Mr. F., if he is in Paris).

I am yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXIV.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, Florence, Dec. 18, 1765,

I HAVE been a month passing the plains of Lombardy—stopping in my way at Milan, Parma, Placenza, and Bologna—with weather as delicious as a kindly April in England, and have been three days in crossing a part of the Appenines covered with thick snow—Sad transition! I stay here three days to dine with our Plenipo Lords T——d and C——r, and in five days shall tread the Vatican, and be introduced to all the Saints in the Pantheon. I stay but fourteen days to pay these civilities, and then decamp for Naples. Pray send the inclosed to my wife, and Becket's letter to London.

Yours truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXV.

TO MISS STERNE.

MY DEAR GIRL, Naples, Feb. 3, 1766.

YOUR letter, my Lydia, has made me both laugh and cry. Sorry am I that you are both so afflicted with the ague, and by all means I wish you both to fly from Tours, because I remember it is situated between two rivers, la Loire, and le Cher—which must occasion fogs, and damp unwholesome weather—therefore for the same reason go not to Bourges en Bresse—'tis as vile a place for agues. I find myself infinitely better than I was—and hope to have added at least ten years to my life by this journey to Italy—the climate is heavenly, and I find new principles of health in me, which I have been long a stranger to—but trust me, my Lydia, I will find you out, wherever you are, in May. Therefore I beg you to direct to me at Belloni's at Rome, that I may have some idea where you will be then. The account you give me of Mrs. C—— is truly amiable, I shall ever honor her—Mr. C. is a diverting companion —what he said of your little French admirer was truly droll—the Marquis de —— is an impostor, and not worthy of your acquaintance—he only pretended to know me, to get introduced to your mother—I desire you will get your mother to write to Mr. C. that I may discharge every debt,

and then, my Lydia, if I live, the produce of my pen shall be yours—if fate reserves me not that—the humane and good, part for thy father's sake, part for thy own, will never abandon thee! If your mother's health will permit her to return with me to England—your summers I will render as as agreeable as I can at Coxwould—your winters at York—you know my publications call me to London. If Mr. and Mrs. C— are still at Tours, thank them from me for their cordiality to my wife and daughter. I have purchased you some little trifles, which I shall give you when we meet, as proofs of affection from

Your fond father,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXVI.

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

MY DEAR H. Naples, Feb. 5, 1766.

'Tis an age since I have heard from you—but as I read the London Chronicle, and find no tidings of your death, or that you are even at the point of it, I take it as I wish it, that you have got over thus much of the winter free from the damps, both of climate and spirits; and here I am, as happy as a king after all, growing fat, sleek, and well-liking—not improving in stature, but in breadth. We have a jolly carnival of it—nothing but operas—punchinelloes—festinoes and masquerades—We

(that is, *nous autres*) are all dressing out for one this night at the Princess Francavivalla, which is to be superb. The English dine with her (exclusive), and so much for small chat—except that I saw a little comedy acted last week with more expression and spirit, and true character, than I shall see one hastily again. I stay here till the holy week, which I shall pass at Rome, where I occupy myself a month—My plan was to have gone from thence for a fortnight to Florence—and then by Leghorn to Marseilles directly home—but am diverted from this by the repeated proposals of accompanying a gentleman, who is returning by Venice, Vienna, Saxony, Berlin, and so by the Spaw, and thence through Holland to England—'tis with Mr. E. I have known him these three years, and have been with him ever since I reach'd Rome; and as I know him to be a good-hearted young gentleman, I have no doubt of making it answer both his views and mine—at least I am persuaded we shall return home together, as we set out, with friendship and good-will. Write your next letter to me at Rome, and do me the following favor if it lies in your way, which I think it does—to get me a letter of recommendation to our Ambassador (Lord Stormont) at Vienna. I have not the honor to be known to his Lordship, but Lords P—— or H——, or twenty you better know, would write a certificate for me, importing, that I am not fallen out of the clouds. If this will cost my cousin little trouble, do inclose it in your next letter to me at Belloni's. You have left

Skelton I trow a month, and I fear have had a most sharp winter, if one may judge of it from the severity of the weather here, and all over Italy, which exceeded any thing known till within these three weeks, that the sun has been as hot as we could bear it. Give my kind services to my friends —especially to the household of faith—my dear Garland—to Gilbert—to the worthy Colonel—to Cardinal S——, to my fellow-labourer Pantagruel—dear cousin Antony, receive my kindest love and wishes.

Yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

P. S. Upon second thoughts, direct your next to me at Mr. W. banker, at Venice.

LETTER XLVII.

TO MR. FOLEY, AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR, Naples, Feb. 8, 1766.

I DESIRE Mrs. Sterne may have what cash she wants—if she has not received it before now: she sends me word she has been in want of cash these three weeks—be so kind as to prevent this uneasiness to her—which is doubly so to me. I have made very little use of your letters of credit, having since I left Paris taken up no more money than about fifty louis at Turin, as much at Rome—and a few ducats here—and as I now travel from hence to Rome, Venice, through Vienna to Berlin, &c.

with a gentleman of fortune, I shall draw for little more till my return—so you will have always enough to spare for my wife. The beginning of March be so kind as to let her have a hundred pounds to begin her year with—

'There are a good many English here, very few in Rome, or other parts of Italy. The air of Naples agrees very well with me—I shall return fat—my friendsip to all who honor me with theirs—Adieu, my dear friend—I am ever yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXVIII.

TO MR. PANCHAUD, AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR, Naples, Feb. 14, 1766.

I WROTE last week to you to desire you would let Mrs. Sterne have what money she wanted—it may happen, as that letter went inclosed in one to her at Tours; that you will receive this first—I have made little use of your letters of credit, as you will see by that letter, nor shall I want much (if any) till you see me, as I travel now in company with a gentleman—however, as we return by Venice, Vienna, Berlin &c. to the Spaw, I should be glad if you will draw me a letter of credit upon some one at Venice, to the extent of fifty louis—but I am persuaded I shall not want half of them—however, in case of sicknes or accidents, one would not go so long a rout without money in

one's pocket. The bankers here are not so conscientious as my friend P. they would make me pay twelve per cent. if I was to get a letter here. I beg your letters, &c. may be inclosed to Mr. Watson at Venice—where we shall be in the Ascension. I have received much benefit from the air of Naples—but quit it to be at Rome before the holy week. There are about five and twenty English here—but most of them will be decamp'd in two months—there are scarce a third of the number at Rome, I suppose therefore that Paris is full—my warmest wishes attend you—with my love to Mr. F. and compliments to all—I am, dear Sir, very faithfully,

Yours,

L. STERNE.

Sir James Macdonald is in the house with me, and is just recovering a long and most cruel fit of the rheumatism.

LETTER LXIX.

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

DEAR ANTONY, May 25, near Dijon, [1766.]

My desire of seeing both my wife and girl has turned me out of my road towards a delicious Chateau of the Countess of M———, where I have been patriarching it these seven days with her ladyship, and half a dozen of very handsome and

agreeable ladies—her ladyship has the best of hearts—a valuable present not given to every one. To-morrow, with regret, I shall quit this agreeable circle, and post it night and day to Paris, where I shall arrive in two days, and just wind myself up when I am there, enough to roll on to Calais—so I hope to sup with you the king's birth-day, according to a plan of sixteen days standing. Never man has been such a wildgoose chace after a wife as I have been—after having sought her in five or six different towns, I found her at last in *Franche Compté*—Poor woman! she was very cordial, &c. and begs to stay another year or so—my Lydia pleases me much—I found her greatly improved in every thing I wished her—I am most unaccountably well, and most unaccountably nonsensical—'tis at least a proof of good spirits, which is a sign and token given me in these latter days, that I must take up again the pen—In faith, I think I shall die with it in my hand, but I shall live these ten years, my Antony, notwithstanding the fears of my wife, whom I left most melancholy on that account. This is a delicious part of the world; most celestial weather, and we lie all day, without damps, upon the grass—and that is the whole of it, except the inner man (for her ladyship is not stingy of her wine) is inspired twice a day with the best Burgundy that grows upon the mountains which terminate our lands here. Surely you will not have decamped to Crazy Castle before I reach town—The summer here is set in in good earnest—'tis more than we can say for Yorkshire

—I hope to hear a good tale of your alum-works —have you no other works in hand? I do not expect to hear from you, so God prosper you—and all your undertakings. I am, my dear cousin,

Most affectionately yours,

L. STERNE.

Remember me to Mr. G——, Cardinal S——, the Colonel, &c. &c. &c.

LETTER LXX.

TO MR. PANCHAUD AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR, York, June 28, 1766.

I WROTE last week to Mr. Becket to discharge the balance due to you—and I have received a letter from him, telling me that if you will draw upon him for one hundred and sixty pounds, he will punctually pay it to your order—so send the draughts when you please. Mrs. Sterne writes me word she wants fifty pounds—which I desire you will let her have. I will take care to remit it to your correspondent—I have such an entire confidence in my wife, that she spends as little as she can, though she is confined to no particular sum—her expences will not exceed three hundred pounds a year, unless by ill health or a journey—and I am very willing she should have it—and you may rely in case it ever happens that she should draw for fifty or a hundred pounds extraordinary, that it and every demand shall be punctually paid—and with

proper thanks; and for this the whole Shandean family are ready to stand security. 'Tis impossible to tell you how sorry I was that my affairs hurried me so quick through Paris, as to deprive me of seeing my old friend Mr. Foley, and of the pleasure I proposed in being made known to his better half—but I have a probability of seeing him this winter. Adieu, dear Sir, and believe me

Most cordially yours,

L. STERNE.

P. S. Mrs. Sterne is going to Chalons, but your letter will find her, I believe, at Avignon—She is very poorly—and my daughter writes to me, with sad grief of heart, that she is worse.

LETTER LXXI.

TO MR.'S.

DEAR SIR, Coxwould, July 23, 1766.

ONE might be led to think that there is a fatality regarding us—we make appointments to meet, and for these two years have not seen each other's face but twice—we must try, and do better for the future—Having sought you with more zeal than C.... sought the Lord, in order to deliver you the books you bade me purchase for you at Paris—I was forced to pay carriage for them from London down to York—but as I shall neither charge you the books nor the carriage—'tis not worth talking

about.—Never man, my dear Sir, has had a more agreeable tour than your Yorick—and at present I am in my peaceful retreat, writing the ninth volume* of Tristram.—I shall publish but one this year, and the next I shall begin a new work of four volumes, which, when finished, I shall continue Tristram with fresh spirit. What a difference of scene here? But, with a disposition to be happy, 'tis neither this place nor t'other, that renders us the reverse.—In short, each man's happiness depends upon himself—he is a fool if he does not enjoy it.

What are you about, dear S——? Give me some account of your pleasures—you had better come to me for a fortnight, and I will shew, or give you (if needful), a practical dose of my philosophy: but I hope you do not want it—if you did—'twould be the office of a friend to give it.—Will not even our races tempt you? You see I use all arguments.—Believe me yours most truly,

LAURENCE STERNE.

LETTER LXXII.

TO MR. PANCHAUD, AT PARIS.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Coxwould, Sept. 21, 1766.

If Mrs. Sterne should draw upon you for fifty louis d'ors, be so kind as to remit her the money—and pray be so good as not to draw upon Mr.

* Alluding to the first edition.

Becket for it (as he owes me nothing), but favor me with the draft, which I will pay to Mr. Selwin. A young nobleman is now negociating a jaunt with me for six weeks, about Christmas, to the Fauxbourg de St. Germain—I should like much to be with you for so long—and if my wife should grow worse (having had a very poor account of her in my daughter's last), I cannot think of her being without me—and however expensive the journey would be, I would fly to Avignon to administer consolation to both her and my poor girl.—Wherever I am, believe me, dear Sir,

Yours,

L. STERNE.

My kind compliments to Mr. Foley: though I have not the honor of knowing his rib, I see no reason why I may not present all due respects to the better half of so old a friend, which I do by these presents—with my friendliest wishes to Miss P.

LETTER LXXIII.

TO MR. FOLEY, AT PARIS.

MY DEAR FOLEY, Coxwould, October 25, 1766.

I DESIRED you would be so good as to remit to Mrs. Sterne fifty louis, a month ago—I dare say you have done it—but her illness must have cost her a good deal—therefore having paid the last

fifty pounds into Mr. Selwin's hands, I beg you to send her thirty guineas more—for which I send a bank bill to Mr. Becket by this post—but surely had I not done so, you would not stick at it—for be assured, my dear Foley, that the First Lord of the Treasury is neither more able or more willing (nor perhaps half so punctual) in repaying with honor all I ever can be in your books. My daughter says her mother is very ill—and I fear going fast down by all accounts—'tis melancholy in her situation to want any aid that is in my power to give—do write to her—and believe me, with all compliments to your Hotel,

Yours very truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXIV.

TO MR. PANCHAUD.

DEAR SIR, York, November 25, 1766.

I JUST received yours—and am glad that the balance of accounts is now paid to you—Thus far all goes well.—I have received a letter from my daughter, with the pleasing tidings that she thinks her mother out of danger—and that the air of the country is delightful (excepting the winds); but the description of the Chateau my wife has hired is really pretty—on the side of the Fountain of Vaucluse—with seven rooms of a floor, half furnished with tapestry, half with blue taffety, the

permission to fish, and to have game; so many partridges a week, &c,; and the price—guess! sixteen guineas a year—there's for you, P. About the latter end of next month my wife will have occasion for a hundred guineas—and pray be so good, my dear Sir, as to give orders that she may not be disappointed—she is going to spend the Carnival at Marseilles at Christmas.—I shall be in London by Christmas-week, and then shall balance this remittance to Mrs. S. with Mr. S——. I am going to lie-in of another child of the Shandaick procreation, in town, I hope you wish me a safe delivery—I fear my friend Mr. F. will have left town before I get there.—Adieu, dear Sir—I wish you every thing in this world which will do you good, for I am, with unfeigned truth,

Yours,

L. STERNE.

Make my compliments acceptable to the good and worthy Baron d'Holbach, Miss P. &c. &c.

LETTER LXXV.

FROM IGNATIUS SANCHO, TO MR. STERNE.

REVEREND SIR, [1766.]

It would be an insult on your humanity, (or perhaps look like it), to apologize for the liberty I am taking.—I am one of those people whom the vulgar and illiberal call negroes.—The first part of

my life was rather unlucky as I was placed in a family who judged ignorance the best and only security for obedience—A little reading and writing I got by unwearied application.—The latter part of my life has been, through God's blessing, truly fortunate—having spent it in the service of one of the best and greatest families in the kingdom—my chief pleasure has been books—Philanthropy I adore.—How very much, good Sir, am I (amongst millions) indebted to you for the character of your amiable Uncle Toby!—I declare I would walk ten miles in the dog-days, to shake hands with the honest Corporal.—Your sermons have touched me to the heart, and I hope have amended it, which brings me to the point.—In your tenth discourse,* is this very affecting passage—" Consider how great a part of our species " in all ages down to this—have been trod under " the feet of cruel and capricious tyrants, who " would neither hear their cries, nor pity their " distresses—Consider slavery—what it is—how " bitter a draught—and how many millions are " made to drink of it."—Of all my favorite authors, not one has drawn a tear in favor of my miserable black brethren—excepting yourself, and the humane author of Sir Geo. Ellison.—I think you will forgive me; I am sure you will applaud me for beseeching you to give one half hour's attention to slavery, as it is this day practised in our West-Indies.—That subject, handled in your striking manner, would ease the yoke (perhaps) of many

* See Vol. III. p. 136.

—but if only of one—gracious God! what a feast to a benevolent heart! and sure I am, you are an epicurean in acts of charity.—You who are universally read, and 'as universally' admired—you could not fail.—Dear Sir, think in me you behold the uplifted hands of thousands of my brother Moors. Grief (you pathetically observe) is eloquent; figure to yourself their attitudes; hear their supplicating addresses!—alas! you cannot refuse. —Humanity must comply—in which hope I beg permission to subscribe myself,

Reverend Sir, &c.

I. S.

LETTER LXXVI.

FROM MR. STERNE, TO IGNATIUS SANCHO.

Coxwould, July 27, 1766.

THERE is a strange coincidence, Sancho, in the little events (as well as in the great ones) of this world: for I had been writing a tender tale of the sorrows of a friendless poor negro-girl, and my eyes had scarce done smarting with it, when your letter of recommendation, in behalf of so many of her brethren and sisters, came to me—but why *her brethren?* or yours, Sancho, any more than mine? It is by the finest tints, and most insensible gradations, that nature descends from the fairest face about St. James's to the sootiest complexion in Africa:—at which tint of these is it, that the ties

of blood are to cease? and how many shades must we descend lower still in the scale, ere mercy is to vanish with them! But 'tis no uncommon thing, my good Sancho, for one half of the world to use the other half of it like brutes, and then endeavour to make 'em so.—For my own part, I never look *westward* (when I am in a pensive mood at least) but I think of the burthens which our brothers and sisters are *there* carrying, and could I ease their shoulders from one ounce of them, I declare I would set out this hour upon a pilgrimage to Mecca for their sakes—which, by the bye, Sancho, exceeds your walk of ten miles in about the same proportion that a visit of humanity should one of mere form.—However, if you meant my Uncle Toby, more he is your debtor.—If I can weave the tale I have wrote into the work I am about—'tis at the service of the afflicted—and a much greater matter; for, in serious truth, it casts a sad shade upon the world, that so great a part of it are, and have been so long bound in chains of darkness, and in chains of misery; and I cannot but both respect and felicitate you, that by so much laudable diligence you have broke the one—and that by falling into the hands of so good and merciful a family, Providence has rescued you from the other.

And so good-hearted Sancho, adieu! and believe me I will not forget your letter.

Yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXVII.

TO MR. W.

Coxwould, Dec. 20, 1766.

THANKS, my dear W., for your letter. I am just preparing to come and greet you and many other friends in town—I have drained my ink-standish to the bottom, and after I have published, shall set my face, not towards Jerusalem, but towards the Alps—I find I must once more fly from death whilst I have strength—I shall go to Naples, and see whether the air of that place will not set this poor frame to rights—As to the project of getting a bear to lead, I think I have enough to do to govern myself—and however profitable it might be (according to your opinion), I am sure it would be unpleasurable—Few are the minutes of life, and I do not think that I have any to throw away on any one being.——I shall spend nine or ten months in Italy, and call upon my wife and daughter in France at my return—so shall be back by the King's birth-day—what a project!—and now, my dear friend, am I going to York, not for the sake of society—nor to walk by the side of the muddy Ouse, but to recruit myself of the most violent spitting of blood that ever mortal man experienced; because I had rather (in case 'tis ordained so) die there, than in a post-chaise on the road—If the amour of my uncle Toby do not please you, I am mistaken—and so with a droll

story I will finish this letter—A sensible friend of mine, with whom, not long ago, I spent some hours in conversation, met an apothecary (an acquaintance of ours)—the latter asked him how he did? Why, ill, very ill—I have been with Sterne, who has given me such a dose of *Attic salt* that I am in a fever—Attic salt, Sir, Attic salt! I have Glauber salt, I have Epsom salt, in my shop, &c. —Oh! I suppose 'tis some French salt—I wonder you would trust his report of the medicine, he cares not what he takes himself. I fancy I see you smile—I long to be able to be in London, and embrace my friends there—and shall enjoy myself a week or ten days at Paris with my friends, particularly the Baron d'Holbach, and the rest of the joyous set. As to the females—no, I will not say a word about them—only I hate borrowed characters taken up (as a woman does her shift) for the purpose she intends to effectuate. Adieu, adieu —I am yours whilst

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXVIII.

TO MR. PANCHAUD, AT PARIS.

DEAR P. London, Feb. 13, 1767.

I PAID yesterday (by Mr. Becket) a hundred guineas, or pounds, I forget which, to Mr. Selwin —But you must remit to Mrs. Sterne at Marseilles

a hundred louis before she leaves that place, which will be in less than three weeks. Have you got the ninth volume of Shandy?*—it is liked the best of all here. I am going to publish a Sentimental Journey through France and Italy—the undertaking is protected and highly encouraged by all our noblesse—'tis subscribed for, at a great rate—'twill be an original—in large quarto—the subscription half-a-guinea—If you can procure me the honor of a few names of men of science, or fashion, I shall thank you—they will appear in good company, as all the nobility here almost have honored me with their names. My kindest remembrance to Mr. Foley—respects to Baron d'Holbach, and believe me ever, ever yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXIX.

TO MISS STERNE.

Old Bond-street, Feb. 23, 1767.

AND so, my Lydia! thy mother and thyself are returning back again from Marseilles to the banks of the Sorgue—and there thou wilt sit and fish for trouts—I envy you the sweet situation. Petrarch's tomb I should like to pay a sentimental visit to ——the Fountain of Vaucluse, by thy description, must be delightful—I am also much pleased with

* Alluding to the first edition.

the account you give me of the Abbé de Sade—you find great comfort in such a neighbour—I am glad he is so good as to correct thy translation of my Sermons—dear girl, go on, and make me a present of thy work—but why not the House of Mourning? 'tis one of the best. I long to receive the life of Petrarch and his Laura, by your Abbé; but I am out of all patience with the answer the Marquis made the Abbé—'twas truly coarse, and I wonder he bore it with any christian patience—But to the subject of your letter—I do not wish to know who was the busy fool, who made your mother uneasy about Mrs. ——, 'tis true I have a friendship for her, but not to infatuation—I believe I have judgment enough to discern hers, and every woman's faults. I honor thy mother for her answer—" that she wished not to be informed, " and begged him to drop the subject." Why do you say that your mother wants money?—whilst I have a shilling, shall you not both have nine-pence out of it? I think, if I have my enjoyments, I ought not to grudge you yours. I shall not begin my Sentimental Journey till I get to Coxwould—I have laid a plan for something new, quite out of the beaten track. I wish I had you with me—and I would introduce you to one of the most amiable and gentlest of beings, whom I have just been with —not Mrs. ——, but a Mrs. J. the wife of as worthy a man as I ever met with—I esteem them both. He possesses every manly virtue—honor and bravery are his characteristics, which have distinguished him nobly in several instances—I shall

make you be better acquainted, with his character, by sending Orme's History, with the books you desired—and it is well worth your reading; for Orme is an elegant writer, and a just one; he pays no man a compliment at the expence of truth. Mrs. J—— is kind,—and friendly—of a sentimental turn of mind—and so sweet a disposition, that she is too good for the world she lives in—Just GOD! if all were like her, what a life would this be!—Heaven, my Lydia, for some wise purpose has created different beings—I wish my dear child knew her—thou art worthy of her friendship, and she already loves thee; for I sometimes tell her what I feel for thee. This is a long letter—write soon—and never let your letters be studied ones—write naturally—and then you will write well. I hope your mother has got quite well of her ague—I have sent her some of Huxham's tincture of the bark. I will order you a guitar, since the other is broke. Believe me, my Lydia, that I am yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXX.

TO MR. PANCHAUD, AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR, London, Feb. 27, 1767.

MY daughter begs a present of me, and you must know I can deny her nothing—It must be strung with cat-gut, and of five chords,—*sic hiama*

in Italiano la chitera di cinque corde—she cannot get such a thing at Marseilles—at Paris one may have every thing—Will you be so good to my girl as to make her happy in this affair, by getting some musical body to buy one, and send it to her at Avignon, directed to Monsieur Teste;—I wrote last week to desire you would remit Mrs. S. a hundred louis—'twill be all, except the guitar, I shall owe you—send me your account, and I will pay Mr. Selwin—direct to me at Mr. Becket's—all kind respects to my friend Mr. F. and your sister.

Yours cordially,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXXI.*

TO ELIZA.†

ELIZA will receive my books with this. The sermons came all hot from the heart: I wish that I could give them any title to be offered to yours.

* This and the nine following Letters have no dates to them, but were evidently written in the months of March and April, 1767. They are therefore here placed together.

† "The Editor of the first publication of Mr. Sterne's Letters to Eliza, gives the following account of this lady: "Mrs. Elizabeth "Draper, wife of Daniel Draper, Esq. counsellor at Bombay, and at "present [*i. e.* in 1775] chief of the factory at Surat, a gentleman very "much respected in that quarter of the globe.—She is by birth an "East-Indian; but the circumstance of being born in the country "not proving sufficient to defend her delicate frame against the heats "of that burning climate, she came to England for the recovery of her "health, when by accident she became acquainted with Mr. Sterne. "He immediately discovered in her a mind so congenial with his own,

—The others came from the head—I am more indifferent about their reception.

I know not how it comes about, but I am half in love with you—I ought to be wholly so; for I never valued (or saw more good qualities to value) or thought more of one of your sex than of you; so adieu.

Yours faithfully,
if not affectionately,

L. STERNE.

" so enlightened, so refined, and so tender, that their mutual attraction " presently joined them in the closest union that purity could possibly " admit of: he loved her as his friend, and prided in her as his pupil; " all her concerns became presently his; her health, her circum- " stances, her reputation, her children, were his; his fortune, his time, " his country, were at her disposal, so far as the sacrifice of all or any " of these might in his opinion contribute to her real happiness. If " it is asked, whether the glowing heat of Mr. Sterne's affection never " transported him to a flight beyond the limits of pure Platonism, the " publisher will not take upon him absolutely to deny; but this he " thinks, so far from leaving any stain upon that gentleman's memory, " that it perhaps includes his fairest encomium; since to cherish the " seeds of piety and chastity in a heart which the passions are inte- " rested to corrupt, must be allowed to be the noblest effort of a soul " fraught and fortified with the justest sentiments of religion and " virtue."

After reading these letters, the curiosity of the public will be naturally excited to inquire concerning the fate of the lady to whom they were addressed. To this question it will be sufficient to answer, that she has been dead some years; and that it might give pain to many worthy persons if the circumstances which attended the latter part of her life were disclosed, as they are generally said to have reflected no credit either on her prudence or discretion.

LETTER LXXXII.

TO THE SAME.

I CANNOT rest, Eliza, though I shall call on you at half-past twelve, till I know how you do—May thy dear face smile, as thou risest, like the sun of this morning. I was much grieved to hear of your alarming indisposition yesterday; and disappointed too, at not being let in.—Remember, my dear, that a friend has the same right as a physician. The etiquettes of this town (you'll say) say otherwise.—No matter! Delicacy and propriety do not always consist in observing their frigid doctrines.

I am going out to breakfast, but shall be at my lodgings by eleven; when I hope to read a single line under thy own hand, that thou art better, and wilt be glad to see thy Bramin.

9 o'clock.

LETTER LXXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

I GOT thy letter last night, Eliza, on my return from Lord Bathurst's, where I dined, and where I was heard (as I talked of thee an hour without intermission) with so much pleasure and attention, that the good old Lord toasted your health three

different times; and now he is in his eighty-fifth year, says he hopes to live long enough to be introduced as a friend to my fair Indian disciple, and to see her eclipse all other nabobesses as much in wealth, as she does already in exterior, and (what is far better) in interior merit. I hope so too. This nobleman is an old friend of mine.—You know he was always the protector of men of wit and genius: and has had those of the last century, Addison, Steele, Pope, Swift, Prior, &c. &c. always at his table.—The manner in which his notice began of me, was as singular as it was polite. —He came up to me, one day, as I was at the Princess of Wales's court. "I want to know you, "Mr. Sterne; but it is fit you should know, also, "who it is that wishes this pleasure. You have "heard (continued he) of an old Lord Bathurst, "of whom your Popes and Swifts have sung and "spoken so much: I have lived my life with ge- "niuses of that cast; but have survived them; and "despairing ever to find their equals, it is some "years since I have closed my accounts, and shut "up my books, with thoughts of never opening "them again; but you have kindled a desire in me "of opening them once more before I die: which "I now do; so go home and dine with me."— This nobleman, I say, is a prodigy; for at eighty-five he has all the wit and promptness of a man of thirty. A disposition to be pleased, and a power to please others beyond whatever I knew: added to which, a man of learning, courtesy, and feeling.

He heard me talk of thee, Eliza, with uncom-

mon satisfaction;—for there was only a third person, and of sensibility, with us.—And a most sentimental afternoon, till nine o'clock, have we passed! But thou, Eliza, wert the star that conducted and enliven'd the discourse.—And when I talked not of thee, still didst thou fill my mind, and warmed every thought I uttered, for I am not ashamed to acknowledge I greatly miss thee. Best of all good girls! the sufferings I have sustained the whole night on account of thine, Eliza, are beyond my power of words.—Assuredly does Heaven give strength proportioned to the weight he lays upon us! Thou hast been bowed down, my child, with every burden that sorrow of heart, and pain of body, could inflict upon a poor being; and still thou tellest me, thou art beginning to get ease;—thy fever gone, thy sickness, the pain in thy side vanishing also.—May every evil so vanish that thwarts Eliza's happiness, or but awakens thy fears for a moment!—Fear nothing, my dear—Hope every thing; and the balm of this passion will shed its influence on thy health, and make thee enjoy a spring of youth and cheerfulness, more than thou hast hardly yet tasted.

And so thou hast fixed thy Bramin's portrait over thy writing-desk; and will consult it in all doubts and difficulties.——Grateful and good girl! Yorick smiles contentedly over all thou dost; his picture does not do justice to his own complacency.

Thy sweet little plan and distribution of thy time—how worthy of thee! Indeed, Eliza, thou

leavest me nothing to direct thee in; thou leavest me nothing to require, nothing to ask—but a continuation of that conduct which won my esteem, and has made me thy friend for ever.

May the roses come quick back to thy cheeks, and the rubies to thy lips! But trust my declaration, Eliza, that thy husband (if he is the good feeling man I wish him) will press thee to him with more honest warmth and affection, and kiss thy pale, poor dejected face with more transport, than he would be able to do in the best bloom of all thy beauty; and so he ought, or I pity him. He must have strange feeling, if he knows not the value of such a creature as thou art;

I am glad Miss Light* goes with you. She may relieve you from many anxious moments.—I am glad your ship-mates are friendly beings. You could least dispense with what is contrary to your own nature, which is soft and gentle, Eliza. —It would civilize savages.—Though pity were it thou shouldst be tainted with the office! How canst thou make apologies for thy last letter? 'tis most delicious to me, for the very reason you excuse it. Write to me, my child, only such. Let them speak the easy carelessness of a heart that opens itself, any how, and every how, to a man you ought to esteem and trust. Such, Eliza, I write to thee,—and so I should ever live with thee, most artlessly, most affectionately, if Provi-

* Miss Light afterwards married George Stratton, Esq. late in the service of the East-India Company at Madras. She is since dead.

dence permitted thy residence in the same section of the globe:—for I am, all that honor and affection can make me,

THY BRAMIN.

LETTER LXXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

....E this, Eliza, at Mr. James's, whilst he is dressing, and the dear girl, his wife, is writing, beside me, to thee.—I got your melancholy billet before we sat down to dinner. 'Tis melancholy, indeed, my dear, to hear so piteous an account of thy sickness! Thou art encountered with evils enow, without that additional weight! I fear it will sink thy poor soul, and body with it, past recovery.—Heaven supply thee with fortitude! We have talked of nothing but thee, Eliza, and of thy sweet virtues, and endearing conduct, all the afternoon. Mrs. James, and thy Bramin, have mixed their tears a hundred times, in speaking of thy hardships, thy goodness, thy graces.—The ****'s, by heavens, are worthless! I have heard enough to tremble at the articulation of the name.—How could you, Eliza, leave them (or suffer them to leave you rather) with impressions the least favorable? I have told thee enough to plant disgust against their treachery to thee, to the last hour of thy life! yet still thou toldest Mrs. James at last, that thou believest they affectionately love thee.—

Her delicacy to my Eliza, and true regard to her ease of mind, have saved thee from hearing more glaring proofs of their baseness.—For God's sake write not to them; nor foul thy fair character with such polluted hearts.—*They* love thee! What proof? Is it their actions that say so? or their zeal for those attachments which do thee honor, and make thee happy? or their tenderness for thy fame? No—But they *weep*, and say *tender things*. —Adieu to all such for ever. Mrs. James's honest heart revolts against the idea of ever returning them one visit.—I honor her, and I honor thee for almost every act of thy life, but this blind partiality for an unworthy being.

Forgive my zeal, dear girl, and allow me a right which arises only out of that fund of affection I have, and shall preserve for thee to the hour of my death! Reflect, Eliza, what are my motives for perpetually advising thee? think whether I can have any, but what proceed from the cause I have mentioned! I think you are a very deserving woman; and that you want nothing but firmness and a better opinion of yourself, to be the best female character I know. I wish I could inspire you with a share of that vanity your enemies lay to your charge (though to me it has never been visible); because I think, in a well turned mind, it will produce good effects.

I probably shall never see you more; yet I flatter myself you'll sometimes think of me with pleasure; because you must be convinced I love you, and so interest myself in your rectitude, that I had

rather hear of any evil befalling you, than your want of reverence for yourself. I had not power to keep this remonstrance in my breast.—Its now out; so adieu. Heaven watch over my Eliza!

Thine,

YORICK.

LETTER LXXXV.

TO THE SAME.

To whom should Eliza apply in her distress, but to her friend who loves her? why then, my dear, do you apologize for employing me? Yorick would be offended, and with reason, if you ever sent commissions to another, which he could execute. I have been with Zumps; and your pianoforte must be tuned from the brass middle string of your guitar, which is C—I have got you a hammer too, and a pair of plyers to twist your wire with; and may every one of them, my dear, vibrate sweet comfort to my hopes! I have bought you ten handsome brass screws to hang your necessaries upon: I purchased twelve; but stole a couple from you to put up in my own cabin, at Coxwould. I shall never hang, or take my hat off one of them; but I shall think of you. I have bought thee moreover, a couple of iron screws, which are more to be depended on than brass, for the globes.

I have written, also, to Mr. Abraham Walker, pilot at Deal, that I had dispatched these in a packet, directed to his care; which I desired he

would seek after, the moment the Deal machine arrived. I have, moreover, given him directions, what sort of an arm-chair you would want, and have directed him to purchase the best that Deal could afford, and take it, with the parcel, in the first boat that went off. Would I could, Eliza, so supply all thy wants, and all thy wishes! It would be a state of happiness to me. The journal is as it should be—all but its contents. Poor, dear, patient being! I do more than pity you; for I think I lose both firmness and philosophy, as I figure to myself your distresses. Do not think I spoke last night with too much asperity of *****; there was cause; and besides, a good heart ought not to love a bad one; and, indeed, cannot. But adieu to the ungrateful subject.

I have been this morning to see Mrs. James—She loves thee tenderly, and unfeignedly. She is alarmed for thee—She says thou look'dst most ill and melancholy on going away. She pities thee. I shall visit her every Sunday, while I am in town. As this may be my last letter, I earnestly bid thee farewell. May the God of Kindness be kind to thee, and approve himself thy protector, now thou art defenceless! And, for thy daily comfort, bear in thy mind this truth, that whatever measure of sorrow and distress is thy portion, it will be repaid to thee in a full measure of happiness, by the Being thou hast wisely chosen for thy eternal friend.

Farewell, farewell, Eliza! whilst I live, count upon me as the most warm and disinterested of earthly friends.

YORICK.

LETTER LXXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAREST ELIZA,

I BEGAN a new journal this morning; you shall see it; for if I live not till your return to England, I will leave it to you as a legacy. 'Tis a sorrowful page; but I will write cheerful ones; and could I write letters to thee, they should be cheerful ones too: but few, I fear, will reach thee! However, depend upon receiving something of the kind by every post; till then, thou wavest thy hand, and bid'st me write no more.

Tell me how you are; and what sort of fortitude Heaven inspires you with. How are you accommodated, my dear? Is all right? Scribble away, any thing, and every thing, to me. Depend upon seeing me at Deal, with the James's, should you be detained there by contrary winds. Indeed, Eliza, I should with pleasure fly to you, could I be the means of rendering you any service, or doing you kindness. Gracious and merciful God! consider the anguish of a poor girl. Strengthen and preserve her in all the shocks her frame must be exposed to. She is now without a protector, but thee! Save her from all accidents of a dangerous element, and give her comfort at the last.

My prayer, Eliza, I hope is heard; for the sky seems to smile upon me as I look up to it. I am

just returned from our dear Mrs. James's, where I have been talking of thee for three hours. She has got your picture, and likes it: but Marriot and some other judges agree that mine is the better, and expressive of a sweeter character. But what is that to the original? yet I acknowledge that hers is a picture for the world, and mine is calculated only to please a very sincere friend, or sentimental philosopher. In the one, you are dressed in smiles, and with all the advantages of silks, pearls, and ermine;—in the other, simple as a vestal—appearing the good girl nature made you;—which, to me, conveys an idea of more unaffected sweetness, than Mrs. Draper, habited for conquest, in a birth-day suit, with her countenance animated, and her dimples visible. If I remember right, Eliza, you endeavoured to collect every charm of your person into your face, with more than *common* care, the day you sat for Mrs. James —Your colour, too, brightened; and your eyes shone with more than usual brilliancy. I then requested you to come simple and unadorned when you sat for me—knowing (as I see with *unprejudiced* eyes) that you could receive no addition from the silk-worm's aid, or jeweller's polish. Let me now tell you a truth, which I believe I have uttered before. When I first saw you, I beheld you as an object of compassion, and as a very plain woman. The mode of your dress (though fashionable) disfigured you. But nothing now could render you such, but the being solicitous to make yourself admired as a handsome one. You are not

handsome, Eliza, nor is yours a face that will please the tenth part of your beholders,—but are something more; for I scruple not to tell you, I never saw so intelligent, so animated, so good a countenance; nor was there (nor ever will be) that man of sense, tenderness, and feeling, in your company three hours, that was not (or will not be) your admirer, or friend, in consequence of it.; that is, if you assume, or assumed, no character, foreign to your own, but appeared the artless being nature designed you for. A something in your eyes, and voice, you possess in a degree more persuasive than any woman I ever saw, read, or heard of. But it is that bewitching sort of nameless excellence, that men of nice sensibility alone can be touched with.

Were your husband in England, I would freely give him five hundred pounds (if money could purchase the acquisition), to let you only sit by me two hours in a day, while I wrote my Sentimental Journey. I am sure the work would sell so much the better for it, that I should be reimbursed the sum more than seven times told.—I would not give nine-pence for the picture of you the Newnhams have got executed—It is the resemblance of a conceited, made-up coquette. Your eyes, and the shape of your face (the latter the most perfect oval I ever saw), which are perfections that must strike the most indifferent judge, because they are equal to any of God's works in a similar way, and finer than any I beheld in all my travels, are manifestly injured by the affected leer of the one, and strange appearance of the other; owing to the attitude of

the head, which is a proof of the artist's, or your friend's, false taste. The ****'s, who verify the character I once gave of teasing, or sticking like pitch, or birdlime, sent a card that they would wait on Mrs. **** on Friday. She sent back, she was engaged.—Then to meet at Ranelagh to-night.—She answered she did not go.—She says, if she allows the least footing, she never shall get rid of the acquaintance; which she is resolved to drop at once. She knows them. She knows they are not her friends, nor yours; and the first use they would make of being with her, would be to sacrifice you to her (if they could) a second time. Let her not then; let her not, my dear, be a greater friend to thee, than thou art to thyself. She begs me to reiterate my request to you, that you will not write to them. It will give her, and thy Bramin, inexpressible pain. Be assured, all this is not without reason on her side. I have my reasons too, the first of which is, that I should grieve to excess, if Eliza wanted that fortitude her Yorick has built so high upon. I said I never more would mention the name to thee; and had I not received it, as a kind of charge, from a dear woman that loves you, I should not have broke my word. I will write again to-morrow to thee, thou best and most endearing of girls! A peaceful night to thee. My spirit will be with thee through every watch of it.

Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

I THINK you could act no otherwise than you did with the young soldier. There was no shutting the door against him, either in politeness or humanity. Thou tellest me he seems susceptible of tender impressions: and that before Miss Light has sailed a fortnight, he will be in love with her. Now I think it a thousand times more likely that he attaches himself to thee, Eliza; because thou art a thousand times more amiable. Five months with Eliza; and in the same room; and an amorous son of Mars besides!—"*It can no be, masser.*" The sun, if he could avoid it, would not shine upon a dunghill; but his rays are so pure, Eliza, and celestial,—I never heard that they were polluted by it. Just such will thine be, dearest child, in this, and every such situation you will be exposed to, till thou art fixed for life. But thy discretion, thy wisdom, thy honor, the spirit of thy Yorick, and thy own spirit, which is equal to it, will be thy ablest counsellors.

Surely, by this time, something is doing for thy accommodation. But why may not clean washing and rubbing do, instead of painting your cabin, as it is to be hung? Paint is so pernicious, both to your nerves and lungs, and will keep you so much longer too out of your apartment; where, I hope, you will pass some of your happiest hours.—

I fear the best of your shipmates are only genteel by comparison with the contrasted crew, with which thou must behold them. So was—you know who!—from the same fallacy that was put upon the judgment, when—but I will not mortify you. If they are decent, and distant, it is enough; and as much as is to be expected. If any of them are more, I rejoice;—thou wilt want every aid; and 'tis thy due to have them. Be cautious only, my dear, of intimacies. Good hearts are open and fall naturally into them. Heaven inspire thine with fortitude, in this, and every deadly trial. Best of God's works, farewell! Love me, I beseech thee; and remember me for ever!

I am, my Eliza, and will ever be, in the most comprehensive sense,

Thy friend,

YORICK.

P. S. Probably you will have an opportunity of writing to me by some Dutch or French ship, or from the Cape de Verd Islands—It will reach me some how.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ELIZA!

Oh! I grieve for your cabin.—And the fresh painting will be enough to destroy every nerve

about thee. Nothing so pernicious as white lead. Take care of yourself, dear girl; and sleep not in it too soon. It will be enough to give you a stroke of an epilepsy. I hope you will have left the ship; and that my letters may meet, and greet you, as you get out of your post-chaise at Deal. When you have got them all, put them, my dear, into some order. The first eight or nine are numbered: but I wrote the rest without that direction to thee; but thou wilt find them out, by the day or hour, which, I hope, I have generally prefixed to them. When they are got together, in chronological order, sew them together under a cover. I trust they will be a perpetual refuge to thee, from time to time; and that thou wilt (when weary of fools and uninteresting discourse) retire, and converse an hour with them and me.

I have not had power, or the heart, to aim at enlivening any one of them, with a single stroke of wit or humour; but they contain something better; and what you will feel more suited to your situation—a long detail of much advice, truth, and knowledge. I hope, too, you will perceive loose touches of an honest heart in every one of them; which speaks more than the most studied periods; and will give thee more ground of trust and reliance upon Yorick, than all that laboured eloquence could supply. Lean then thy whole weight, Eliza, upon them and upon me. "May poverty, distress, "anguish, and shame, be my portion, if ever I "give thee reason to repent the knowledge of me!"

With this asseveration, made in the presence of a just God, I pray to him, that so it may speed with me, as I deal candidly and honorably with thee! I would not mislead thee, Eliza; I would not injure thee, in the opinion of a single individual, for the richest crown the proudest monarch wears.

Remember, that while I have life and power, whatever is mine, you may style, and think, yours. —Though sorry should I be, if ever my friendship was put to the test thus, for your own delicacy's sake. Money and counters are of equal use in my opinion; they both serve to set up with.

I hope you will answer me this letter; but if thou art debarred by the elements, which hurry thee away, I will write one for thee; and knowing it is such a one as thou wouldest have written, I will regard it as my Eliza's.

Honor, and happiness, and health, and comforts of every kind, sail along with thee, thou most worthy of girls! I will live for thee, and my Lydia —be rich for the dear children of my heart—gain wisdom, gain fame, and happiness, to share with them—with thee—and her, in my old age. Once for all, adieu.—Preserve thy life; steadily pursue the ends we proposed; and let nothing rob thee of those powers Heaven has given thee for thy well-being.

What can I add more, in the agitation of mind I am in, and within five minutes of the last post-man's bell, but recommend thee to Heaven, and recommend myself to Heaven with thee, in the

same fervent ejaculation, "that we may be happy, "and meet again; if not in this world, in the "next."—Adieu,—I am thine, Eliza, affectionately, and everlastingly.

YORICK.

LETTER LXXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

I WISH to God, Eliza, it was possible to postpone the voyage to India for another year.—For I am firmly persuaded within my own heart, that thy husband could never limit thee with regard to time.

I fear that Mr. B—— has exaggerated matters.—I like not his countenance. It is absolutely killing.—Should evil befal thee, what will he not have to answer for? I know not the being that will be deserving of so much pity, or that I shall hate more. He will be an outcast alien—In which case I will be a father to thy children, my good girl!—therefore take no thought about them.—

But, Eliza, if thou art so very ill, still put off all thoughts of returning to India this year.—Write to your husband—tell him the truth of your case. If he is the generous, humane man you describe him to be, he cannot but applaud your conduct. I am credibly informed, that his repugnance to your living in England arises only from the dread, which has entered his brain, that thou

mayest run him in debt, beyond thy appointments, and that he must discharge them—that such a creature should be sacrificed for the paltry consideration of a few hundreds, is too, too hard! O! my child! that I could, with propriety, indemnify him for every charge, even to the last mite, that thou hast been of to him! With joy would I give him my whole subsistence—nay, sequester my livings, and trust the treasures Heaven has furnished my head with, for a future subsistence.

You owe much, I allow, to your husband,—you owe something to appearances, and the opinion of the world; but trust me, my dear, you owe much likewise to yourself. " Return, therefore, from Deal, if you continue ill. I will prescribe for you, gratis. You are not the first woman, by many, I have done so for, with success. I will send for my wife and daughter, and they shall carry you in pursuit of health, to Montpellier, the wells of Bançois, the Spa, or whither thou wilt. Thou shalt direct them, and make parties of pleasure in what corner of the world fancy points out to thee. We shall fish upon the banks of Arno, and lose ourselves in the sweet labyrinths of its vallies. And then thou should'st warble to us, as I have once or twice heard thee,—" I'm lost, I'm lost"—but we should find thee again, my Eliza. Of a similar nature to this, was your physician's prescription: " Use gentle exercise, the pure southern air of France, or milder Naples,—with the society of friendly, gentle beings." Sensible man! He certainly entered into your feelings. He knew the

fallacy of medicine to a creature, whose ILLNESS HAS ARISEN FROM THE AFFLICTION OF HER MIND. Time only, my dear, I fear you must trust to, and have your reliance on; may it give you the health so enthusiastic a votary to the charming goddess deserves!

I honor you, Eliza, for keeping secret some things, which, if explained, had been a panegyric on yourself. There is a dignity in venerable affliction which will not allow it to appeal to the world for pity or redress. Well have you supported that character, my amiable, philosophic friend! And, indeed, I begin to think you have as many virtues as my uncle Toby's widow. I don't mean to insinuate, hussey, that *my* opinion is no better founded than his was of Mrs. Wadman; nor do I conceive it possible for any *Trim* to convince me it is equally fallacious. I am sure, while I have my reason, it is not. Talking of widows—pray, Eliza, if ever you are such, do not think of giving yourself to some wealthy nabob—because I design to marry you myself. My wife cannot live long—she has sold all the provinces in France already—and I know not the woman I should like so well for her substitute as yourself. 'Tis true, I am ninety-five in constitution, and you but twenty-five—rather too great a disparity this!—but what I want in youth, I will make up in wit and good-humour. Not Swift so loved his Stella, Scarron his Maintenon, or Waller his Sacharissa, as I will love and sing thee, my wife elect! All those names, eminent as they were, shall give place to thine, Eliza.

Tell me, in answer to this, that you approve and honor the proposal, and that you would (like the Spectator's mistress) have more joy in putting on an old man's slipper, than associating with the gay, the voluptuous, and the young. Adieu, my Simplicia!

Yours,

TRISTRAM.

LETTER XC.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ELIZA,

I HAVE been within the verge of the gates of death. I was ill the last time I wrote to you, and apprehensive of what would be the consequence. My fears were but too well founded; for, in ten minutes after I dispatched my letter, this poor fine-spun frame of Yorick's gave way, and I broke a vessel in my breast, and could not stop the loss of blood till four this morning. I have filled all thy India handkerchiefs with it. It came, I think, from my heart! I fell asleep through weakness. At six I awoke, with the bosom of my shirt steeped in tears. I dreamt I was sitting under the canopy of Indolence, and that thou camest into the room with a shawl in thy hand, and told me, my spirit had flown to thee in the Downs, with tidings of my fate; and that you had come to administer what consolation filial affection could

bestow, and to receive my parting breath and blessing. With that you folded the shawl about my waist, and, kneeling, supplicated my attention. I awoke; but in what a frame! Oh! my God! "But thou wilt number my tears and put them all "into thy bottle."—Dear girl! I see thee,—thou art for ever present to my fancy.—embracing my feeble knees, and raising thy fine eyes to bid me be of comfort: and when I talk to Lydia, the words of Esau, as uttered by thee, perpetually ring in my ears—"Bless *me* even also my father!"—Blessings attend thee, thou child of my heart!

My bleeding is quite stopped, and I feel the principle of life strong within me; so be not alarmed, Eliza—I know I shall do well. I have eat my breakfast with hunger; and I write to thee with a pleasure arising from that prophetic impression in my imagination, that "all will termi-"nate to our heart's content." Comfort thyself eternally with this persuasion, "that the best of "Beings (as thou hast sweetly expressed it) could "not, by a combination of accidents, produce such "a chain of events, merely to be the source of "misery to the leading person engaged in them." The observation was very applicable, very good, and very elegantly expressed. I wish my memory did justice to the wording of it.—Who taught you the art of writing so sweetly, Eliza?—You have absolutely exalted it to a science.—When I am in want of ready cash, and ill health will not permit my genius to exert itself, I shall print your letters, as finished essays, "by an unfortunate Indian

"lady." The style is new; and would almost be a sufficient recommendation for their selling well, without merit—but their sense, natural ease, and spirit, is not to be equalled, I believe, in this section of the globe; nor, I will answer for it, by any of your country-women in yours.—I have shewn your letter to Mrs. B——, and to half the literati in town. You shall not be angry with me for it, because I meant to do you honor by it.—You cannot imagine how many admirers your epistolary productions have gained you, that never viewed your external merits. I only wonder where thou couldst acquire thy graces, thy goodness, thy accomplishments—so connected! so educated! Nature has surely studied to make thee her peculiar care—for thou art (and not in my eyes alone) the best and fairest of all her works.—

And so this is the last letter thou art to receive from me; because the Earl of Chatham* (I read in the papers) is got to the Downs; and the wind, I find, is fair. If so—blessed woman! take my last, last farewell!—Cherish the remembrance of me; think how I esteem, nay, how affectionately I love thee, and what a price I set upon thee! Adieu, adieu! and with my adieu—let me give thee one straight rule of conduct, that thou hast heard from my lips in a thousand forms—but I concentre it in one word—

REVERENCE THYSELF.

* By the Newspapers of the times it appears that the *Earl of Chatham* East-Indiaman sailed from Deal, April 3, 1767.

Adieu, once more, Eliza! May no anguish of heart plant a wrinkle upon thy face, till I behold it again! May no doubt or misgivings disturb the serenity of thy mind, or awaken a painful thought about thy children—for they are Yorick's,—and Yorick is thy friend for ever!—Adieu, adieu, adieu!

P. S. Remember, that Hope shortens all journies, by sweetening them—so sing my little stanza on the subject; with the devotion of an hymn, every morning when thou arisest, and thou wilt eat thy breakfast with more comfort for it.

Blessings, rest, and Hygeia go with thee! May'st thou soon return, in peace and affluence, to illume my night! I am, and shall be, the last to deplore thy loss, and will be the first to congratulate and hail thy return.—

FARE THEE WELL.

LETTER XCI.

TO MISS STERNE.

Bond-street, April 9, 1767.

THIS letter, my dear Lydia, will distress thy good heart, for from the beginning thou wilt perceive no entertaining strokes of humour in it—I cannot be cheerful when a thousand melancholy ideas surround me.—I have met with a loss of near

fifty pounds, which I was taken in for in an extraordinary manner—but what is that loss in comparison of one I may experience?—Friendship is the balm and cordial of life, and without it, 'tis a heavy load not worth sustaining.—I am unhappy—thy mother and thyself at a distance from me, and what can compensate for such a destitution? —For God's sake, persuade her to come and fix in England, for life is too short to waste in separation—and whilst she lives in one country, and I in another, many people will suppose it proceeds from choice—besides, I want thee near me, thou child and darling of my heart!—I am in a melancholy mood, and my Lydia's eyes will smart with weeping, when I tell her the cause that now affects me.—I am apprehensive the dear friend I mentioned in my last letter is going into a decline—I was with her two days ago, and I never beheld a being so altered—she has a tender frame, and looks like a drooping lily, for the roses are fled from her cheeks—I can never see or talk to this incomparable woman without bursting into tears—I have a thousand obligations to her, and I owe her more than her whole sex, if not all the world put together—She has a delicacy in her way of thinking that few possess—our conversations are of the most interesting nature, and she talks to me of quitting this world with more composure than others think of living in it.—I have wrote an epitaph, of which I send thee a copy—'Tis expressive of her modest worth—but may Heaven restore her! and may she live to write mine!

Columns and labour'd urns but vainly shew
An idle scene of decorated woe.
The sweet companion, and the friend sincere,
Need no mechanic help to force the tear.
In heart-felt numbers, never meant to shine,
'Twill flow eternal o'er a hearse like thine:
'Twill flow whilst gentle goodness has one friend,
Or kindred tempers have a tear to lend.

Say all that is kind of me to thy mother, and believe me, my Lydia, that I love thee most truly, —So adieu—I am what I ever was, and hope ever shall be,

Thy affectionate Father,

L. S.

As to Mr. ——, by your description he is a fat fool. I beg you will not give up your time to such a being.—Send me some *batons pour les dents*—there are none good here.

LETTER XCII.

TO LADY P:

Mount Coffee-house, Tuesday, 3 o'clock.

THERE is a strange mechanical effect produced in writing a billet-doux within a stone-cast of the lady who engrosses the heart and soul of an inamorato—for this cause (but mostly because I am to dine in this neighbourhood) have I, Tristram Shandy, come forth from my lodgings to a coffee-house the nearest I could find to my dear Lady ——'s house, and have called for a sheet of gilt paper to try the truth of this article of my creed. —Now for it—

O, my dear lady, what a dishclout of a soul hast thou made of me!—I think, by the bye, this is a little too familiar an introduction for so unfamiliar a situation as I stand in with you—where, Heaven knows, I am kept at a distance—and despair of getting one inch nearer you, with all the steps and windings I can think of to recommend myself to you.—Would not any man in his senses run diametrically from you—and as far as his legs would carry him, rather than thus causelessly, foolishly, and fool-hardily expose himself afresh—and afresh, where his heart and his reason tells him he shall be sure to come off loser, if not totally undone?—Why would you tell me you would be glad to see me?—Does it give you pleasure to make me more unhappy—or does it add to your triumph, that your eyes and lips have turned a man into a fool, whom the rest of the town is courting as a wit?—I am a fool—the weakest, the most ductile, the most tender fool that ever woman tried the weakness of—and the most unsettled in my purposes and resolutions of recovering my right mind.—It is but an hour ago that I kneeled down and swore I never would come near you—and, after saying my Lord's Prayer for the sake of the close, *of not being led into temptation*—out I sallied like any christian hero, ready to take the field against the world, the flesh, and the devil; not doubting but I should finally trample them all down under my feet—and now am I got so near you—within this vile stone's cast of your house—I feel myself drawn into a vortex, that has turned

my brain upside downwards, and though I had purchased a box-ticket to carry me to Miss*******'s benefit, yet I know very well, that was a single line directed to me to let me know Lady —— would be alone at seven, and suffer me to spend the evening with her, she would infallibly see every thing verified I have told her.—I dine at Mr. C——r's, in Wigmore-street; in this neighbourhood, where I shall stay till seven, in hopes you purpose to put me to this proof. If I hear nothing by that time, I shall conclude you are better disposed of—and shall take a sorry hack, and sorrily jog on to the play—Curse on the world. I know nothing but sorrow—except this one thing, that I love you (perhaps foolishly, but)

most sincerely,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XCIII.

TO MR. AND MRS. J.

Old Bond-street, April 21, 1767.

I AM sincerely affected, my dear Mr. and Mrs. J——, by your friendly enquiry, and the interest you are so good to take in my health. God knows I am not able to give a good account of myself, having passed a bad night in much feverish agitation. — My physician ordered me to bed, and to keep therein till some favorable change—I fell ill the moment I got to my lodgings—he says it is owing

to my taking James's Powder, and venturing out on so cold a day as Sunday—but he is mistaken, for I am certain whatever bears the name must have efficacy with me.—I was bled yesterday, and again to-day, and have been almost dead; but this friendly enquiry from Gerrard-street has poured balm into what blood I have left—I hope still, and (next to the sense of what I owe my friends) it shall be the last pleasurable sensation I will part with—if I continue mending, it will yet be some time before I shall have strength enough to get out in a carriage—my first visit will be a visit of true gratitude—I leave my kind friends to guess where—a thousand blessings go along with this, and may Heaven preserve you both.—Adieu, my dear Sir, and dear lady.

I am, your ever obliged,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XCIV.

TO IGNATIUS SANCHO.

Bond-street, Saturday, [*April* 25, 1767.]

I WAS very sorry, my good Sancho, that I was not at home to return my compliments by you for the great courtesy of the Duke of M—g—'s family to me in honoring my list of subscribers with their names—for which I bear them all thanks.—But you have something to add, Sancho, to what I owe your good-will also on this account, and that is, to

send me the subscription-money, which I find a necessity of dunning my best friends for before I leave town—to avoid the perplexities of both keeping pecuniary accounts (for which I have very slender talents), and collecting them (for which I have neither strength of body or mind); and so, good Sancho, dun the Duke of M. the Duchess of M. and Lord M. for their subscriptions, and lay the sin, and money with it too, at my door.—I wish so good a family every blessing they merit, along with my humblest compliments. You know, Sancho, that I am your friend and well-wisher,

L. STERNE.

P. S. I leave town on Friday morning—and should on Thursday, but that I stay to dine with Lord and Lady S——.

LETTER XCV.

TO THE EARL OF S——.

MY LORD, Old Bond-street, May 1, 1767.

I WAS yesterday taking leave of all the town, with an intention of leaving it this day, but I am detained by the kindness of Lord and Lady S——, who have made a party to dine and sup on my account.—I am impatient to set out for my solitude, for there the mind gains strength, and learns to lean upon herself—In the world it seeks or accepts of a few treacherous supports—the feigned compassion of one—the flattery of a second—the civi-

lities of a third—the friendship of a fourth—they all deceive, and bring the mind back to where mine is retreating, to retirement, reflection, and books. My departure is fixed for to-morrow morning, but I could not think of quitting a place where I have received such numberless and unmerited civilities from your lordship, without returning my most grateful thanks, as well as my hearty acknowledgments for your friendly enquiry from Bath. Illness, my lord, has occasioned my silence—Death knocked at my door, but I would not admit him—the call was both unexpected and unpleasant—and I am seriously worn down to a shadow—and still very weak; but weak as I am, I have as whimsical a story to tell you as ever befel one of my family—Shandy's nose, his name, his sash-window, are fools to it—it will serve at least to amuse you.—The injury I did myself last month, in catching cold upon James's Powder—fell, you must know, upon the worst part it could—the most painful, and most dangerous of any in the human body. It was on this crisis I called in an able surgeon, and with him an able physician (both my friends), to inspect my disaster.—'Tis a venereal case, cried my two scientific friends.—'Tis impossible, however, to be that, replied I—for I have had no commerce whatever with the sex, not even with my wife, added I, these fifteen years.—You are, however, my good friend, said the surgeon, or there is no such case in the world.—What the devil, said I, without knowing woman?—We will not reason about it, said the physician, but you must undergo a course of mercury.—I will

lose my life first, said I—and trust to nature, to time, or at the worst to death.—So I put an end, with some indignation, to the conference—and determined to bear all the torments I underwent, and ten times more, rather than submit to be treated like a *sinner*, in a point where I had acted like a *saint*.—Now as the father of mischief would have it, who has no pleasure like that of dishonoring the righteous, it so fell out that from the moment I dismissed my doctors, my pains began to rage with a violence not to be expressed, or supported. Every hour became more intolerable.—I was got to-bed, cried out, and raved the whole night, and was got up so near dead, that my friends insisted upon my sending again for my physician and surgeon. I told them upon the word of a man of honor they were both mistaken, as to my case;—but though they had reasoned wrong, they might act right; but that sharp as my sufferings were, I felt them not so sharp as the imputation which a venereal treatment of my case laid me under.—They answered, that these taints of the blood laid dormant twenty years: but they would not reason with me in a point wherein I was so delicate, but would do all the office for which they were called in, namely, to put an end to my torment, which otherwise would put an end to me—and so I have been compelled to surrender myself—and thus, my dear Lord, has your poor friend, with all his sensibilities, been suffering the chastisement of the grossest sensualist.—Was it not as ridiculous an embarrassment as ever Yorick's spirit was involved

in?—Nothing but the purest conscience of innocence could have tempted me to write this story to my wife, which, by the bye, would make no bad anecdote in Tristram Shandy's Life.—I have mentioned it in my journal to Mrs. ——. In some respects there is no difference between my wife and herself—when they fare alike neither can reasonably complain.—I have just received letters from France, with some hints that Mrs. Sterne and my Lydia are coming to England to pay me a visit—if your time is not better employed, Yorick flatters himself he shall receive a letter from your Lordship, *en attendant*. I am, with great regard,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's
Most faithful humble servant,
L. STERNE.

LETTER CXVI.

TO J. D——N, ESQ.

Old Bond-street, Friday Morning.

I WAS going, my dear D—n, to bed before I received you kind enquiry, and now my chaise stands at my door to take and convey this poor body to its legal settlement. I am ill, very ill,—I languish most affectingly—I am sick both soul and body—it is a cordial to me to hear it is different with you—no man interests himself more in your happiness, and I am glad you are in so fair a

road to it—enjoy it long, my D. whilst I—no matter what—but my feelings are too nice for the world I live in—things will mend. I dined yesterday with Lord and Lady S—; we talked much of you, and your goings on, for every one knows why Sunbury Hill is so pleasant a situation!—You rogue! you have lock'd up my boots—and I go bootless home—and I fear I shall go bootless all my life—Adieu, gentlest and best of souls—adieu.

I am yours most affectionately,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XCVII.

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

MY DEAR COUSIN, Newark, Monday, ten o'clock in the morn.

I HAVE got conveyed thus far like a bale of cadaverous goods consigned to Pluto and company—lying in the bottom of my chaise most of the route, upon a large pillow which I had the *prevoyance* to purchase before I set out—I am worn out—but press on to Barnby Moor to night, and if possible to York the next. I know not what is the matter with me—but some *derangement* presses hard upon this machine—still I think it will not be overset this bout. My love to G—. We shall all meet from the east, and from the south, and (as at the last) be happy together—My kind respects to a few,—I am, dear H.

Truly yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XCVIII.

TO A. L——E, ESQ.

DEAR L——E, Coxwould, June 7, 1767.

I HAD not been many days at this peaceful cottage before your letter greeted me with the seal of friendship, and most cordially do I thank you for so kind a proof of your good will—I was truly anxious to hear of the recovery of my sentimental friend—but I would not write to enquire after her, unless I could have sent her the testimony without the tax, for even how-d'yes to invalids, or those that have lately been so, either call to mind what is past or what may return—at least I find it so. I am as happy as a prince, at Coxwould——and I wish you could see in how princely a manner I live—'tis a land of plenty. I sit down alone to venison, fish, and wild-fowl, or a couple of fowls or ducks, with curds and strawberries, and cream, and all the simple plenty which a rich valley (under Hamilton Hills) can produce—with a clean cloth on my table—and a bottle of wine on my right hand to drink your health. I have a hundred hens and chickens about my yard—and not a parishioner catches a hare, or a rabbit, or a trout, but he brings it as an offering to me. If solitude would cure a love-sick heart, I would give you an invitation—but absence and time lessen no attachment which virtue inspires. I am in high spirits—care

never enters this cottage—I take the air every day in my post-chaise, with two long-tailed horses—— they turn out good ones; and as to myself, I think I am better upon the whole for the medicines and regimen I submitted to in town—May you, dear L——, want neither the one nor the other!

Yours truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XCIX.

TO THE SAME.

Coxwould, June 30, 1767.

I AM in still better health, my dear L——e, than when I wrote last to you, owing I believe to my riding out every day with my friend H——, whose castle lies near the sea,—and there is a beach as even as a mirror, of five miles in length before it—where we daily run races in our chaises, with one wheel in the sea, and the other on land. D—— has obtained his fair Indian, and has this post sent a letter of enquiries after Yorick, and his Bramin. He is a good soul, and interests himself much in our fate. I cannot forgive you, L——e, for your folly in saying you intend to get introduced to the ——. I despise them, and I shall hold your understanding much cheaper than I now do, if you persist in a resolution so unworthy of you. I suppose Mrs. J—— telling you they were

sensible, is the ground-work you go upon—by—they are not clever; though what is commonly called wit, may pass for literature on the other side of Temple-Bar. You say Mrs. J.—— thinks them amiable—she judges too favorably; but I have put a stop to her intentions of visiting them. They are bitter enemies of mine, and I am even with them. *La Bramine* assured me they used their endeavours with her to break off her friendship with me, for reasons I will not write, but tell you. I said enough of them before she left England, and though she yielded to me in every other point, yet in this she obstinately persisted. Strange infatuation!—but I think I have effected my purpose by a falsity, which Yorick's friendship to the Bramine can only justify. I wrote her word that the most amiable of women reiterated my request, that she would not write to them. I said too, she had concealed many for the sake of her peace of mind—when in fact, L——e, this was merely a child of my own brain, made Mrs. J——'s by adoption, to enforce the argument I had before urged so strongly. Do not mention this circumstance to Mrs. J——, 'twould displease her—and I had no design in it but for the Bramine to be a friend to herself. I ought now to be busy from sun-rise to sun-set, for I have a book to write—a wife to receive—an estate to sell—a parish to superintend, and, what is worst of all, a disquieted heart to reason with—these are continual calls upon me. I have received half a dozen letters to press me to join my friends at Scar-

borough, but I am at present deaf to them all. I perhaps may pass a few days there something later in the season, not at present—and so, dear L——e, adieu.

I am most cordially yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER C.

TO IGNATIUS SANCHO.

Coxwould, June 30, [1767.]

I MUST acknowledge the courtesey of my good friend Sancho's letter were I ten times busier than I am, and must thank him too for the many expressions of his good will, and good opinion—'Tis all affectation to say a man is not gratified with being praised—we only want it to be sincere—and then it will be taken, Sancho, as kindly as yours. I left town very poorly—and with an idea I was taking leave of it for ever—but good air, a quiet retreat, and quiet reflections along with it, with an ass to milk, and another to ride upon (if I chuse it), all together do wonders. I shall live this year at least, I hope, be it but to give the world, before I quit it, as good impressions of me as you have, Sancho. I would only covenant for just so much health and spirits as are sufficient to carry my pen through the task I have set it this summer. But I am a resigned being, Sancho, and take health and sickness, as I do light and darkness, or the vicissi-

tudes of seasons—that is, just as it pleases God to send them—and accommodate myself to their periodical returns, as well as I can—only taking care, whatever befals me in this silly world—not to lose my temper at it. This I believe, friend Sancho, to be the truest philosophy—for this we must be indebted to ourselves, but not to our fortunes. Farewell—I hope you will not forget your custom of giving me a call at my lodgings next winter—in the mean time, I am very cordially,

My honest friend, Sancho,
Yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CI.

TO MR. AND MRS. J.

Coxwould, July 6, 1767.

It is with as much true gratitude as ever heart felt, that I sit down to thank my dear friends Mr. and Mrs. J——— for the continuation of their attention to me; but for this last instance of their humanity and politeness to me, I must ever be their debtor.—I never can thank you enough, my dear friends, and yet I thank you from my soul—and for the single day's happiness your goodness would have sent me, I wish I could send you back thousands.—I cannot, but they will come of themselves—and so God bless you. I have had twenty times

my pen in my hand since I came down, to write a letter to you both in Gerrard-street—but I am a shy kind of a soul at the bottom, and have a jealousy about troubling my friends, especially about myself—I am now got perfectly well, but was a month after my arrival in the country, in but a poor state—my body has got the start, and is at present more at ease than my mind—but this world is a school of trials, and so Heaven's will be done! —I hope you have both enjoyed all that I have wanted—and to complete your joy, that your little lady flourishes like a vine at your table, to which I hope to see her preferred by next winter. I am now beginning to be truly busy at my Sentimental Journey—the pains and sorrows of this life having retarded its progress—but I shall make up my lee-way, and overtake every body in a very short time.

What can I send you that Yorkshire produces? tell me—I want to be of use to you, for I am, my dear friends, with the truest value and esteem,

Your ever obliged

L. STERNE.

LETTER CII.

TO MR. PANCHAUD AT PARIS.

MY DEAR PANCHAUD, York, July 20, 1767.

BE so kind as to forward what letters are arrived from Mrs. Sterne at your office by to-day's post,

or the next, and she will receive them before she quits Avignon, for England—she wants to lay out a little money in an annuity for her daughter—advise her to get her own life insured in London, lest my Lydia should die before her.—If there are any packets, send them with the ninth volume* of Shandy, which she has failed of getting—she says she has drawn for fifty louis—when she leaves Paris send by her my account.——Have you got me any French subscriptions, or subscriptions in France?—Present my kindest service to Miss P. I know her politeness and good-nature will incline her to give Mrs. J. her advice about what she may venture to bring over.——I hope every thing goes on well, though never half so well as I wish——God prosper you, my dear friend—Believe me most warmly

Yours,

L. STERNE.

The sooner you send me the gold snuff-box, the better—'tis a present from my best friend.

LETTER CIII.

TO MR. AND MRS. J.

Coxwould, August 2, 1767.

My dear friends Mr. and Mrs. J.— are infinitely kind to me, in sending now and then a letter to in-

* Alluding to the first edition.

quire after me—and to acquaint me how they are. —You cannot conceive, my dear lady, how truly I bear a part in your illness. I wish Mr. J— would carry you to the South of France in pursuit of health—but why need I wish it, when I know his affection will make him do that and ten times as much to prevent a return of those symptoms which alarmed him so much in the spring— your politeness and humanity are always contriving to treat me agreeably, and what you promise next winter will be perfectly so—but you must get well—and your little dear girl must be of the party, with her parents and friends, to give it a relish—I am sure you shew no partiality but what is natural and praise-worthy, in behalf of your daughter, but I wonder my friends will not find her a play-fellow; and I both hope and advise them not to venture along through this warfare of life without two strings at least to their bow. I had letters from France by last night's post, by which (by some fatality) I find not one of my letters has reached Mrs. Sterne. This gives me concern, as it wears the aspect of unkindness, which she by no means merits from me. My wife and dear girl are coming to pay me a visit for a few months;—I wish I may prevail with them to tarry longer.—You must permit me, dear Mrs. J. to make my Lydia known to you, if I can prevail with my wife to come and spend a little time in London, as she returns to France. I expect a small parcel—may I trouble you, before you write next, to send to my lodgings to ask if there is any thing directed to me that you can inclose under

cover. I have but one excuse for this freedom, which I am prompted to use, from a persuasion that it is doing you pleasure to give you an opportunity of doing an obliging thing—and as to myself, I rest satisfied, for 'tis only scoring up another debt of thanks to the millions I owe you both already—Receive a thousand and a thousand thanks, yes, and with them ten thousand friendly wishes for all you wish in this world—May my friend Mr. J. continue blessed with good health, and may his good lady get perfectly well, there being no woman's health or comfort I so ardently pray for.—Adieu, my dear friends—believe me most truly and faithfully yours,

L. STERNE.

P. S. In Eliza's last Letter, dated from St. Jago, she tells me, as she does you, that she is extremely ill—God protect her!—By this time surely she has set foot upon dry land at Madras—I heartily wish her well, and if Yorick was with her he would tell her so—but he is cut off from this, by bodily absence—I am present with her in spirit, however—but what is that? you will say.

LETTER CIV.

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

MY DEAR H. Coxwould, Aug. 11, 1767.

I AM glad all has passed with so much amity *inter te & filium Marcum tuum*, and that Madame has found grace in thy sight—All is well that ends

well—and so much for moralizing upon it. I wish you could, or would, take up your parable, and prophecy as much good concerning me and my affairs.—Not one of my letters has got to Mrs. Sterne since the notification of her intentions, which has a pitiful air on my side, though I have wrote her six or seven—I imagine she will be here the latter end of September; though I have no date for it, but her impatience, which, having suffered by my supposed silence, I am persuaded will make her fear the worst—If that is the case, she will fly to England—a most natural conclusion—You did well to discontinue all commerce with James's powders—as you are so well, rejoice therefore, and let your heart be merry—mine ought upon the same score—for I never have been so well since I left college—and should be a marvellous happy man, but for some reflections which bow down my spirits—but if I live but even three or four years, I will acquit myself with honor—and—no matter! we will talk this over when we meet.—If all ends as temperately as with you, and that I find grace, &c. &c., I will come and sing Te Deum, or drink *poculum elevatum*, or do any thing in the world.—I should depend upon G—'s critic upon my head, as much as Moliere's old woman upon his comedies—when you do not want her society, let it be carried into your bedchamber to flay her, or clap it upon her bum—to ——and give her my blessing as you do it.—

My postillion has set me a-ground for a week, by one of my pistols bursting in his hand, which

he taking for granted to be quite shot of—he instantly fell upon his knees and said (Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name), at which, like a good Christian, he stopped, not remembering any more of it—the affair was not so bad as he at first thought, for it has only *bursten* two of his fingers (he says).—I long to return to you, but I sit here alone as solitary and sad as a tom-cat, which by the bye is all the company I keep—he follows me from the parlour to the kitchen, into the garden, and every place—I wish I had a dog—my daughter will bring me one—and so God be about you, and strengthen your faith—I am affectionately, dear cousin yours,

L. STERNE.

My service to the C——, though they are from home, and to Panty.

LETTER CV.

TO MR. AND MRS. J.

MY DEAR FRIENDS, Coxwould, Aug. 13, 1767.

I BUT copy your great civility to me in writing you word, that I have this moment received another letter wrote eighteen days after the date of the last from St. Jago—if our poor friend could have wrote another letter to England, you would in course have had it—but I fear, from the circumstance of great hurry and bodily disorder in which

she was, when she dispatched this, she might not have time.—In case it has so fallen out, I send you the contents of what I have received—and that is a melancholy history of herself and sufferings since they left St. Jago—continual and most violent rheumatism all the time—a fever brought on with fits, and attended with delirium; and every terrifying symptom—the recovery from this left her low and emaciated to a skeleton.—I give you the pain of this detail with a bleeding heart, knowing how much at the same time it will affect yours. The three or four last days of our journal leave us with hopes she will do well at last, for she is more cheerful—and seems to be getting into better spirits; and health will follow in course. They have crossed the line—are much becalmed, by which, with other delays, she fears they will lose their passage to Madras—and be some months sooner for it at Bombay.—Heaven protect her, for she suffers much, and with uncommon fortitude.—She writes much to me about her dear friend Mrs. J—— in her last packet. In truth, my good lady, she loves and honors you from her heart; but, if she did not, I should not esteem her, or wish her so well as I do.——Adieu, my dear friends—you have few in the world more truly and cordially

Yours,

L. STERNE.

P. S. I have just received, as a present from a man I shall ever love, a most elegant gold snuff-box, fabricated for me at Paris—'tis not the first

pledge I have received of his friendship.—May I presume to inclose you a letter of chit-chat which I shall write to Eliza? I know you will write yourself, and my letter may have the honor to *chaperon* yours to India—they will neither of them be the worse received for going together in company, but I fear they will get late in the year to their destined port, as they go first to Bengal.

LETTER CVI.

TO MISS STERNE.

Coxwould, August 24, 1767.

I AM truly surprised, my dear Lydia, that my last letter has not reached thy mother and thyself —It looks most unkind on my part, after your having wrote me word of your mother's intention of coming to England, that she has not received my letter to welcome you both—and though in that I said I wished you would defer your journey till March, for before that time I should have published my sentimental work, and should be in town to receive you—yet I will shew you more real politesses than any you have met with in France, as mine will come warm from the heart.—I am sorry you are not here at the races, but *les fêtes champêtres*, of the Marquis de Sade have made you amends.—I know B—— very well, and he is what in France would be called admirable—that would be but so-so here—You are right—he stu-

dies nature more than any, or rather most of the French comedians—If the Empress of Russia pays him and his wife a pension of twenty thousand livres a year; I think he is very well off.—The folly of staying till after twelve for supper—that you two excommunicated beings might have meat!—" his conscience would not let it be served before." —Surely the Marquis thought you both, being English, could not be satisfied without it. I would have given, not my gown and cassock (for I have but one), but my topaz ring, to have seen the *petits maîtres et maîtresses* go to mass, after having spent the night in dancing.—As to my pleasures, they are few in compass. My poor cat sits purring beside me—your lively French dog shall have his place on the other side of my fire—but if he is as devilish as when I last saw him, I must tutor him, for I will not have my cat abused—in short, I will have nothing devilish about me—a combustion will spoil a sentimental thought.

Another thing I must desire—do not be alarmed —'tis to throw all your rouge pots into the Sorgue before you set out—I will have no rouge put on in England—and do not bewail them as ———— did her silver seringue or glister equipage, which she lost in a certain river—but take a wise resolution of doing without rouge. I have been three days ago bad again—with a spitting of blood—and that unfeeling brute* * * * * * * came—and drew my curtains, and with a voice like a trumpet, halloo'd in my ear —Z—ds, what a fine kettle of fish have you brought yourself to, Mr. S.——! In a faint

voice I bade him leave me, for comfort sure was never administered in so rough a manner—Tell your mother, I hope she will purchase what either of you may want at Paris—'tis an occasion not to be lost—so write to me from Paris, that I may come and meet you in my post-chaise with my long-tailed horses—and the moment you have both put your feet in it, call it hereafter yours.—Adieu, dear Lydia—believe me what I ever shall be,

Your affectionate father,

L. STERNE.

I think I shall not write to Avignon any more, but you will find one for you at Paris—once more adieu.

LETTER CVII.

TO SIR W.

MY DEAR SIR, September 19, 1767.

You are perhaps the drollest being in the universe—why do you banter me so about what I wrote to you?—Tho' I told you, every morning I jump'd into Venus's lap (meaning thereby the sea), was you to infer from that, that I leaped into the ladies beds afterwards?—The body guides you—the mind me. I have wrote the most whimsical letter to a lady that was ever read, and talked of body and soul too—I said she had made me vain by saying she was mine more than ever

woman was—but she is not the lady of Bond-street, nor ——— square, nor the lady who supped with me in Bond-street, on scollop'd oysters, and other such things—nor did she ever go *tête-à-tête* with me to Salt Hill.——Enough of such nonsense—The past is over—and I can justify myself unto myself—can you do as much?—No, 'faith! —"You can feel!"—Aye, so can my cat, when he hears a female cater-wauling on the house-top—but cater-wauling disgusts me. I had rather raise a gentle flame, than have a different one raised in me.—Now I take heaven to witness, after all this *badinage*, my heart is innocent—and the sporting of my pen is equal, just equal to what I did in my boyish days, when I got astride of a stick, and gallop'd away—The truth is this—that my pen governs me—not me my pen. You are much to blame if you dig for marle, unless you are sure of it. I was once such a puppy myself, as to pare, and burn, and had my labour for my pains, and two hundred pounds out of my pocket. Curse on farming (said I) I will try if the pen will not succeed better than the spade. The following up of that affair (I mean farming) made me lose my temper, and a cart-load of turnips was (I thought) very dear at two hundred pounds.

In all your operations may your own good sense guide you—bought experience is the devil.—Adieu, adieu!—Believe me

Yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CVIII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, Coxwould, Sept. 27, 1767.

You are arrived at Scarborough when all the world has left it—but you are an unaccountable being, and so there is nothing more to be said on the matter—You wish me to come to Scarborough, and join you to read a work that is not yet finished—besides, I have other things in my head. My wife will be here in three or four days, and I must not be found straying in the wilderness—but I have been there. As for meeting you at Bluit's, with all my heart—I will laugh, and drink my barley-water with you. As soon as I have greeted my wife and daughter, and hired them a house at York, I shall go to London, where you generally are in spring—and then my Sentimental Journey will, I dare say, convince you that my feelings are from the heart, and that that heart is not of the worst of moulds—praised be God for my sensibility! Though it has often made me wretched, yet I would not exchange it for all the pleasures the grossest sensualist ever felt. Write to me the day you will be at York—'tis ten to one but I may introduce you to my wife and daughter. Believe me, my good Sir,

Ever yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CIX.

TO MR. PANCHAUD, AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR, York, Oct. 1, 1767.

I HAVE ordered my friend Becket to advance for two months your account which my wife this day deliver'd—she is in raptures with all your civilities. This is to give you notice to draw upon your correspondent—and Becket will deduct out of my publication. To-morrow morning I repair with her to Coxwould, and my Lydia seems transported with the sight of me. Nature, dear P——, breathes in all her composition; and except a little vivacity —which is a fault in the world we live in—I am fully content with her mother's care of her.—Pardon this digression from business—but 'tis natural to speak of those we love. As to the subscriptions which your friendship has procured me, I must have them to incorporate with my lists which are to be prefixed to the first volume. My wife and daughter join in millions of thanks—they will leave me the first of December.——Adieu, adieu!—Believe me

Yours, most truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CX.

TO MR. AND MRS. J.

Coxwould, October 3, 1767.

I HAVE suffered under a strong desire for above this fortnight to send a letter of inquiries after the health and the well-being of my dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. J——; and I do assure you both, 'twas merely owing to a little modesty in my temper not to make my good-will troublesome, where I have so much, and to those I never think of, but with ideas of sensibility and obligation, that I have refrain'd. Good God! to think I could be in town, and not go the first step I made to Gerrard-street! —My mind and body must be at sad variance with each other, should it ever fall out that it is not both the first and last place also where I shall betake myself, were it only to say, "God bless you" —May you have every blessing he can send you! 'tis a part of my litany, where you will always have a place whilst I have a tongue to repeat it—And so you heard I had left Scarborough, which you would no more credit, than the reasons assign'd for it—I thank you for it kindly—tho' you have not told me what they were; being a shrewd divine, I think I can guess. I was ten days at Scarborough in September, and was hospitably entertained by one of the best of our Bishops; who, as he kept house there, press'd me to be with him—and his household consisted of a gentleman, and two ladies,

which, with the good Bishop and myself, made so good a party that we kept much to ourselves. I made in this time a connection of great friendship with my mitred host, who would gladly have taken me with him back to Ireland. However, we all left Scarborough together, and lay fifteen miles off, where we kindly parted——Now it was supposed (and have since heard) that I e'en went on with the party to London, and this I suppose was the reason assign'd for my being there. I dare say charity would add a little to the account, and give out that 'twas on the score of one, and perhaps both of the ladies—and I will excuse charity on that head, for a heart disengaged could not well have done better. I have been hard writing ever since—and hope by Christmas I shall be able to give a gentle rap at your door—and tell you how happy I am to see my two good friends. I assure you I spur on my Pegasus more violently upon that account, and am now determined not to draw bit, till I have finished this Sentimental Journey—which I hope to lay at your feet, as a small (but a very honest) testimony of the constant truth with which I am,

My dear friends,
Your ever obliged
And grateful

L. STERNE.

P. S. My wife and daughter arrived here last night from France. My girl has return'd an elegant accomplish'd little slut—my wife——but I hate to praise my wife—'tis as much as decency will allow

to praise my daughter. I suppose they will return next summer to France.——They leave me in a month to reside at York for the winter—and I stay at Coxwould till the first of January.

LETTER CXI.

TO MRS. F——.

DEAR MADAM, Coxwould, Friday.

I RETURN you a thousand thanks for your obliging inquiry after me—I got down last summer very much worn out—and much worse at the end of my journey—I was forced to call at his Grace's house (the Archbishop of York) to refresh myself a couple of days upon the road near Doncaster—Since I got home to quietness, and temperance, and good books, and good hours, I have mended—and am now very stout—and in a fortnight's time shall perhaps be as well as you yourself could wish me. I have the pleasure to acquaint you that my wife and daughter are arrived from France——I shall be in town to greet my friends by the first of January. Adieu, dear Madam—Believe me

Yours sincerely,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXII.

TO MRS. H.

Coxwould, Oct. 12, 1767.

EVER since my dear H. wrote me word she was mine more than ever woman was, I have been racking my memory to inform me where it was that you and I had that affair together. People think that I have had many, some in body, some in mind; but as I told you before, you have had me more than any woman—therefore you must have had me, H——, both in mind and in body. —Now I cannot recollect where it was, nor exactly when—it could not be the lady in Bond-street, or Grosvenor-street, or ———— Square, or Pall-mall. We shall make it out, H. when we meet—I impatiently long for it——'tis no matter —I cannot now stand writing to you to-day—I will make it up next post—for dinner is upon table, and if I make Lord F—— stay, he will not frank this.——How do you do? Which parts of Tristram do you like best?—God bless you.

Yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXIII.

TO MR. AND MRS. J——.

Coxwould, November 12, 1767.

FORGIVE me, dear Mrs. J——, if I am troublesome in writing something betwixt a letter and a card, to inquire after you and my good friend Mr. J——, whom 'tis an age since I have heard a syllable of.——I think so, however, and never more felt the want of a house I esteem so much, as I do now when I can hear tidings of it so seldom—and have nothing to recompense my desires of seeing its kind possessors, but the hopes before me of doing it by Christmas.—I long sadly to see you—and my friend Mr. J——. I am still at Coxwould—my wife and girl* here.—She is a dear good creature—affectionate, and most elegant in body and mind—she is all heaven could give me in a daughter—but like other blessings, not given, but lent; for her mother loves France—and this dear part of me must be torn from my arms to follow her mother, who seems inclined to establish her in France, where she has had many advantageous offers.—Do not smile at my weakness, when I say I don't wonder at it, for she is as accomplish'd a slut as France can produce.—You shall excuse all this—if you won't, I desire Mr.

* Mrs. Medalle thinks an apology may be necessary for publishing this Letter—the best she can offer is—that it was written by a fond parent (whose commendation she is proud of) to a very sincere friend.

J—— to be my advocate—but I know I don't want one.—With what pleasure shall I embrace your dear little pledge—whom I hope to see every hour increasing in stature, and in favor, both with God and man!—I kiss all your hands with a most devout and friendly heart.——No man can wish you more good than your meagre friend does—few so much, for I am, with infinite cordiality, gratitude, and honest affection,

My dear Mrs. J——,

Your ever faithful

L. STERNE.

P. S. My Sentimental Journey will please Mrs. J——, and my Lydia, I can answer for those two. It is a subject which works well, and suits the frame of mind I have been in for some time past—I told you my design in it was to teach us to love the world and our fellow-creatures better than we do—so it runs most upon those gentler passions and affections, which aid so much to it. Adieu, and may you and my worthy friend Mr. J—— continue examples of the doctrine I teach!

LETTER CXIV.

TO MRS. H.

Coxwould, Nov. 15, 1767.

Now be a good dear woman, my H——, and execute these commissions well—and when I see

you I will give you a kiss—there's for you!—But I have something else for you which I am fabricating at a great rate, and that is my Sentimental Journey, which shall make you cry as much as it has affected me—or I will give up the business of sentimental writing—and write to the body—that is, H. what I am doing in writing to you—but you are a *good body*, which is worth half a score mean souls.—

I am, yours, &c. &c.

L. SHANDY.

LETTER CXV.

TO A. L——E, ESQ.

Coxwould, November 19, 1767.

You make yourself unhappy, dear L——e, by imaginary ills—which you might shun instead of putting yourself in the way of.—Would not any man in his senses fly from the object he adores, and not waste his time and his health in increasing his misery by so vain a pursuit?—The idol of your heart is one of ten thousand.—The Duke of —— has long sighed in vain—and can you suppose a woman will listen to you that is proof against titles, stars, and red ribands?—Her heart (believe me, L——e) will not be taken in by fine men, or fine speeches—if it should ever feel a preference, it will choose an object for itself, and it must be a singular character that can make an im-

pression on such a being—she has a platonic way of thinking, and knows love only by name—the natural reserve of her character, which you complain of, proceeds not from pride, but from a superiority of understanding, which makes her despise every man that turns himself into a fool—Take my advice and pay your addresses to Miss ——; she esteems you, and time will wear off an attachment which has taken so deep a root in your heart.——I pity you from my soul—but we are all born with passions which ebb and flow (else they would play the devil with us) to different objects —and the best advice I can give you, L——e, is to turn the tide of yours another way.—I know not whether I shall write again while I stay at Coxwould.—I am in earnest at my sentimental work—and intend being in town soon after Christmas—in the mean time, adieu.—Let me hear from you, and believe me, dear L.,

Yours, &c.

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXVI.

TO THE EARL OF ——.

MY LORD, Coxwould, November 28, 1767.

'Tis with the greatest pleasure I take my pen to thank your Lordship for your letter of inquiry about Yorick—he has worn out both his spirits and body with the Sentimental Journey—'tis true, that

an author must feel himself, or his reader will not—but I have torn my whole frame into pieces by my feelings.—I believe the brain stands as much in need of recruiting as the body—therefore I shall set out for town the twentieth of next month, after having recruited myself a week at York. I might, indeed, solace myself with my wife (who is come from France), but in fact I have long been a sentimental being—whatever your Lordship may think to the contrary. The world has imagined, because I wrote Tristram Shandy, that I was myself more Shandean than I really ever was—'tis a good-natured world we live in, and we are often painted in divers colours according to the ideas each one frames in his head.—A very agreeable lady arrived three years ago at York, in her road to Scarborough—I had the honor of being acquainted with her, and was her *chaperon*—all the females were very inquisitive to know who she was—" Do not tell, ladies; 'tis a mistress my " wife has recommended to me—nay, moreover, " has sent me from France."

I hope my book will please you, my Lord, and then my labour will not be totally in vain. If it is not thought a chaste book, mercy on them that read it, for they must have warm imaginations indeed! Can your Lordship forgive my not making this a longer epistle?——In short, I can but add this, which you already know—that I am, with gratitude and friendship,

My Lord,

Your obedient faithful,

L. STERNE.

If your Lordship is in town in Spring, I should be happy if you became acquainted with my friends in Gerrard-street—you would esteem the husband and honor the wife—she is the reverse of most of her sex—they have various pursuits—she but one—that of pleasing her husband.—

LETTER CXVII.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY SIR G. M.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Coxwould, Dec. 3, 1767.

For though you are his Excellency, and I still but Parson Yorick—I still must call you so—and were you to be next Emperor of Russia, I could not write to you, or speak of you, under any other relation—I felicitate you, I don't say how much, because I can't—I always had something like a kind of revelation within me, which pointed out this track for you in which you are so happily advanced—it was not only my wishes for you, which were ever ardent enough to impose upon a visionary brain, but I thought I actually saw you just where you now are—and that is just, my dear Macartney, where you should be.—I should long, long ago, have acknowledged the kindness of a letter of yours from Petersburgh, but hearing daily accounts you was leaving it—this is the first time I knew well *where* my thanks would find you—how they will find you I know well—that is, the same I ever knew you. In three weeks I shall

kiss your hand,—and sooner, if I can finish my Sentimental Journey.—The deuce take all sentiments! I wish there was not one in the world! My wife is come to pay me a sentimental visit as far as from Avignon—and the *politesse* arising from such a proof of her urbanity has robbed me of a month's writing, or I had been in town now. —I am going to lye-in; being at Christmas at my full reckoning—and unless what I shall bring forth is not *press'd* to death by these devils of printers, I shall have the honor of presenting to you a *couple of as clean brats* as ever chaste brain conceived—they are frolicksome too, *mais cela n'empeche pas* —I put your name down with many wrong and right *honorables*, knowing you would take it not well if I did not make myself happy with it. Adieu, my dear friend.

Believe me, yours, &c.

L. STERNE.

P. S. If you see Mr. Crawfurd, tell him I greet him kindly.

LETTER CXVIII.

TO A. L——E, ESQ.

DEAR L. Coxwould, December 7, 1767.

I SAID I would not, perhaps, write any more, but it would be unkind not to reply to so interesting a letter as yours.—I am certain you may de-

pend upon Lord ——'s promises, he will take care of you in the best manner he can, and your knowledge of the world, and of languages in particular, will make you useful in any department.—If his Lordship's scheme does not succeed, leave the kingdom—go to the east, or to the west, for travelling would be of infinite service to both your body and mind—But more of this when we meet—now to my own affairs.——I have had an offer of exchanging two pieces of preferment I hold here, for a living of three hundred and fifty pounds a year in Surry, about thirty miles from London, and retaining Coxwould, and my prebendaryship—the country also is sweet—but I will not, cannot come to any determination, till I have consulted with you, and my other friends.—I have great offers too in Ireland—the Bishops of C—— and R—— are both my friends—but I have rejected every proposal, unless Mrs. S—— and my Lydia could accompany me thither—I live for the sake of my girl, and with her sweet light burthen in my arms, I could get up fast the hill of preferment, if I chose it—but without my Lydia, if a mitre was offered me, it would sit uneasy upon my brow.—Mrs. S——'s health is insupportable in England.—She must return to France, and justice and humanity forbid me to oppose it.—I will allow her enough to live comfortably until she can rejoin me.—My heart bleeds, L——e, when I think of parting with my child——'twill be like the separation of soul and body—and equal to nothing but what passes at that tremendous moment; and like it in

one respect, for she will be in one kingdom, whilst I am in another.—You will laugh at my weakness—but I cannot help it—for she is a dear disinterested girl.—As a proof of it—when she left Coxwould, and I bade her adieu, I pulled out my purse, and offered her ten guineas for her private pleasures—her answer was pretty, and affected me too much: "No, my dear papa, our expences of coming from "France may have straitened you—I would rather "put a hundred guineas into your pocket than "take ten out of it."—I burst into tears—but why do I practise upon your feelings—by dwelling on a subject that will touch your heart?—It is too much melted already by its own suffering, L——e, for me to add a pang, or cause a single sigh.—God bless you—I shall hope to greet you by New-year's day in perfect health.—Adieu, my dear friend—I am most truly and cordially yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXIX.

TO J—— H—— S——, ESQ.

[*December*, 1767.]

LITERAS vestras lepidissimas, mi consobrine, consobrinis meis omnibus carior, accepi die Veneris; sed posta non rediebat versus Aquilonem eo die, aliter scripsissem prout desideradas. Nescio quid est materia cum me, sed sum fatigatus & ægrotus de meâ uxore plus quam unquam—& sum

possessus cum diabolo qui pellet me in urbem—& tu es possessus cum eodem malo spiritu qui te tenet in deserto esse tentatum ancillis tuis, et perturbatum uxore tuâ—crede mihi, mi Antoni, quod isthæc non est via ad salutem sive hodiernam; sive eternam; num tu incipis cogitare de pecuniâ, quæ, ut ait Sanctus Paulus, est radix omnium malorum, & non satis dicis in corde tuo, ego Antonius de Castello Infirmo, sum jam quadraginta & plus annos natus, & explevi octavum meum lustrum, et tempus est me curare, & meipsum Antonium facere hominem felicem & liberum, et mihimet ipsi benefacere, ut exhortatur Solomon, qui dicit quòd nihil est melius in hâc vitâ, quàm quòd homo vivat festivè, & quòd edat et bibat, & bono fruatur quia hoc est sua portio & dos in hoc mundo.

Nunc te scire vellemus, quòd non debeo esse reprehendi pro festinando eundo ad Londinum, quia Deus est testis, quòd non propero præ gloria, & pro me ostendere; nam diabolus iste qui me intravit, non est diabolus vanus, at consobrinus suus Lucifer—sed est diabolus amabundus, qui non vult sinere me esse solum; nam cùm non cumbenbo cum uxore meâ, sum mentulatior quàm par est—& sum mortaliter in amore—& sum fatuus; ergo tu me, mi care Antoni, excusabis, quoniam tu fuisti in amore, & per mare & per terras ivisti & festinâsti sicut diabolus eodem te propellente diabolo. Habeo multa ad te scribere—sed scribo hanc epistolam in domo coffeatariâ & plenâ sociorum strepitosorum, qui non permittent me cogitare unam cogitationem.

Saluta amicum Panty meum, cujus literis respondebo—saluta amicos in domo Gisbrosensi, & oro, credas me vinculo consobrinitatis & amoris ad te, mi Antoni, devinctissimum.

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXX.

TO MR. AND MRS. J——.

York, December 23, 1767.

I WAS afraid that either Mr. or Mrs. J——, or their little blossom, was drooping—or that some of you were ill, by not having the pleasure of a line from you, and was thinking of writing again to inquire after you all——when I was cast down myself with a fever, and bleeding at my lungs, which had confined me to my room near three weeks—when I had the favor of yours, which till to-day I have not been able to thank you both kindly for, as I most cordially now do—as well as for all your professions and proofs of good-will to me—I will not say I have not balanced accounts with you in this—All I know is, that I honor and value you more than I do any good creatures upon earth—and that I could not wish your happiness, and the success of whatever conduces to it, more than I do, was I your brother—but, good God! are we not all brothers and sisters who are friendly, virtuous, and good? Surely, my dear friends, my illness has been a sort of sympathy for your afflic-

tions upon the score of your dear little one.—I am worn down to a shadow; but as my fever has left me, I set off the latter end of next week with my friend Mr. Hall for town—I need not tell my friends in Gerrard-street, I shall do myself the honor to visit them, before either Lord —— or Lord ——, &c. &c.—I thank you, my dear friend, for what you say so kindly about my daughter—it shews your good heart, for as she is a stranger, 'tis a free gift in you—but when she is known to you, she shall win it fairly—but, alas! when this event is to happen, is in the clouds. Mrs. S—— has hired a house ready-furnished at York, till she returns to France, and my Lydia must not leave her.

What a sad scratch of a letter! but I am weak, my dear friends, both in body and mind—so God bless you—you will see me enter like a ghost—so I tell you before-hand not to be frightened.—I am, my dear friends, with the truest attachment and esteem, ever yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXXI.

TO THE SAME.

Old Bond-street, January 1 [1768.]

Not knowing whether the moisture of the weather will permit me to give my kind friends in Gerrard-street a call this morning for five minutes—I beg leave to send them all the good wishes, com-

pliments, and respects I owe them.—I continue to mend, and doubt not but this, with all other evils and uncertainties of life, will end for the best.—I send all compliments to your fire-sides this Sunday-night—Miss Ascough the wise, Miss Pigot the witty, your daughter the pretty, and so on.—If Lord O—— is with you, I beg my dear Mrs. J—— will present the inclosed to him——'twill add to the millions of obligations I already owe you.—I am sorry that I am no subscriber to Soho this season—it deprives me of a pleasure worth twice the subscription——but I am just going to send about this quarter of the town, to see if is not too late to procure a ticket, undisposed of, from some of my Soho friends; and if I can succeed, I will either send or wait upon you with it by half an hour after three to-morrow—if not, my friend will do me the justice to believe me truly miserable.—I am half engaged, or more, for dinner on Sunday next, but will try to get disengaged in order to be with my friends.—If I cannot, I will glide like a shadow uninvited to Gerrard-street some day this week, that we may eat our bread and meat in love and peace together.—God bless you both! I am, with the most sincere regard,

Your ever obliged,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXXII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIENDS, Old Bond-street, Monday.

I HAVE never been a moment at rest since I wrote yesterday about this Soho ticket—I have been at a Secretary of State to get one—have been upon one knee to my friend Sir G—— M——, Mr. Lascelles—and Mr. Fitzmaurice——without mentioning five more——I believe I could as soon get you a place at Court, for every body is going—but I will go out and try a new circle—and if you do not hear from me by a quarter after three, you may conclude I have been unfortunate in my supplications.—I send you this state of the affair, lest my silence should make you think I had neglected what I promised—but no—Mrs. J—— knows me better, and would never suppose it would be out of the head of one who is with so much truth

Her faithful friend,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Thursday, Old Bond-street.

A THOUSAND thanks, and as many excuses, my dear friends, for the trouble my blunder has

given you. By a second note I am astonished I could read Saturday for Sunday, or make any mistake in a card wrote by Mrs. J—s, in which my friend is as unrivalled, as in a hundred greater excellencies.

I am now tied down neck and heels (twice over) by engagements every day this week, or most joyfully would have trod the old pleasing road from Bond to Gerrard-street. My books will be to be had on Thursday, but possibly on Wednesday in the afternoon.—I am quite well, but exhausted with a room full of company every morning till dinner.—How do I lament I cannot eat my morsel (which is always sweet) with such kind friends! —The Sunday following I will assuredly wait upon you both—and will come a quarter before four, that I may have both a little time and a little day-light, to see Mrs. J———'s picture—I beg leave to assure my friends of my gratitude for all their favors, with my sentimental thanks for every token of their good-will,—Adieu, my dear friends—

I am truly yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXXIV.

FROM DR. EUSTACE, IN AMERICA, TO THE REV. MR. STERNE, WITH A WALKING-STICK.

SIR,

WHEN I assure you that I am a great admirer of Tristram Shandy, and have, ever since his in-

troduction into the world, been one of his most zealous defenders against the repeated assaults of prejudice and misapprehension, I hope you will not treat this unexpected appearance in his company as an intrusion.

You know it is an observation, as remarkable for its truth as for its antiquity, that a similitude of sentiments is the general parent of friendship.—It cannot be wondered at, that I should conceive an esteem for a person whom nature had most indulgently enabled to frisk and curvet with ease through all these intricacies of sentiments, which, from irresistible propensity, she had impelled me to trudge through without merit or distinction.

The only reason that gave rise to this address to you, is my accidentally having met with a piece of true Shandean statuary, I mean, according to vulgar opinion, for to such judges both appear equally destitute of regularity or design—it was made by a very ingenious gentleman of this province, and presented to the late governor Dobbs; after his death Mrs. D. gave it me: its singularity made many desirous of procuring it; but I had resolved at first not to part with it, till, upon reflection, I thought it would be a very proper, and probably not an unacceptable, compliment to my favorite author, and in his hands might prove as ample a field for meditation, as a button-hole, or a broom-stick.

I have the honor to be, &c. &c.

LETTER CXXV.

MR. STERNE'S ANSWER.

SIR, London, February 9, 1768.

I THIS moment received your obliging letter, and Shandean piece of sculpture along with it, of both which testimonies of your regard I have the justest sense, and return you, dear Sir, my best thanks and acknowledgment. Your walking-stick is in no sense more Shandaick than in that of its having more handles than one: the parallel breaks only in this, that in using the stick, every one will take the handle which suits his convenience. In Tristram Shandy, the handle is taken which suits the passions, their ignorance, or their sensibility. There is so little true feeling in the herd of the world, that I wish I could have got an act of parliament, when the books first appeared, that none but wise men should look into them. It is too much to write books, and find heads to understand them; the world, however, seems to come into a better temper about them, the people of genius here being to a man on its side; and the reception it has met with in France, Italy, and Germany, has engaged one part of the world to give it a second reading. The other, in order to be on the strongest side, has at length agreed to speak well of it too. A few hypocrites and Tartuffes, whose approbation could do it nothing but dishonor, remain unconverted.

I am very proud, Sir, to have had a man like you on my side from the beginning; but it is not in the power of every one to taste humour, however he may wish it; it is the gift of God; and, besides, a true feeler always brings half the entertainment along with him; his own ideas are only called forth by what he reads, and the vibrations within him entirely correspond with those excited —'Tis like reading himself—and not the book.

In a week's time I shall be delivered of two volumes of the Sentimental Travels of Mr. Yorick through France and Italy; but, alas! the ship sails three days too soon, and I have but to lament it deprives me of the pleasure of presenting them to you.

Believe me, dear Sir, with great thanks for the honor you have done me, with true esteem,

Your obliged humble servant,

LAURENCE STERNE.

LETTER CXXVI.

TO L. S——N, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, Old Bond-street, Wednesday.

YOUR commendations are very flattering. I know no one whose judgment I think more highly of, but your partiality for me is the only instance in which I can call it in question.—Thanks, my good Sir, for the prints—I am much your debtor for them—if I recover from my ill state of health,

and live to revisit Coxwould this summer, I will decorate my study with them, along with six beautiful pictures I have already of the sculptures on poor Ovid's tomb, which were executed on marble at Rome.—It grieves one to think such a man should have died in exile, who wrote so well on the art of love.—Do not think me encroaching if I solicit a favor—'tis either to borrow, or beg (to beg if you please) some of those touched with chalk which you brought from Italy—I believe you have three sets, and if you can spare the imperfect one of cattle on coloured paper, 'twill answer my purpose, which is namely this, to give a friend of ours.—You may be ignorant she has a genius for drawing, and whatever she excels in she conceals, and her humility adds lustre to her accomplishments—I presented her last year with colours, and an apparatus for painting, and gave her several lessons before I left town.—I wish her to follow this art, to be a complete mistress of it—and it is singular enough, but not more singular than true, that she does not know how to make a cow or a sheep, though she draws figures and landscapes perfectly well; which makes me wish her to copy from good prints.——If you come to town next week, and dine where I am engaged next Sunday, call upon me and take me with you —I breakfast with Mr. Beauclerc, and am engaged for an hour afterwards with Lord O——; so let our meeting be either at your house or my lodgings—do not be late, for we will go half an hour before dinner, to see a picture executed by West,

most admirably—he has caught the character of our friend—such goodness is painted in that face, that when one looks at it, let the soul be ever so much unharmonized, it is impossible it should remain so.——I will send you a set of my books—they will take with the generality—the women will read this book in the parlour, and Tristram in the bed-chamber.—Good night, dear Sir—I am going to take my whey, and then to bed. Believe me

Yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXXVII.

TO MISS STERNE.

MY DEAREST LYDIA, February 20, Old Bond-street.

My Sentimental Journey, you say, is admired in York by every one—and 'tis not vanity in me to tell you that it is no less admired here—but what is the gratification of my feelings on this occasion?—The want of health bows me down, and vanity harbours not in thy father's breast—this vile influenza—be not alarmed, I think I shall get the better of it——and shall be with you both the first of May; and if I escape, 'twill not be for a long period, my child—unless a quiet retreat and peace of mind can restore me. The subject of thy letter has astonished me. She could but know little of my feelings, to tell thee, that under the supposition I should survive thy mother, I should bequeath

thee as a legacy to ——. No, my Lydia! 'tis a lady, whose virtues I wish thee to imitate, that I shall entrust my girl to—I mean that friend whom I have so often talked and wrote about—from her you will learn to be an affectionate wife, a tender mother, and a sincere friend—and you cannot be intimate with her, without her pouring some part of the milk of human kindness into your breast, which will serve to check the heat of your own temper, which you partake in a small degree of.—Nor will that amiable woman put my Lydia under the painful necessity to fly to India for protection, whilst it is in her power to grant her a more powerful one in England. But I think, my Lydia, that thy mother will survive me—do not deject her spirits with thy apprehensions on my account. I have sent you a necklace, buckles, and the same to your mother. My girl cannot form a wish that is in the power of her father, that he will not gratify her in—and I cannot in justice be less kind to thy mother. I am never alone——The kindness of my friends is ever the same—I wish though I had thee to nurse me; but I am denied that. Write to me twice a week, at least. God bless thee, my child, and believe me ever, ever, thy

Affectionate father,

L. S.

LETTER CXXVIII.

TO MRS. J.

Tuesday.

YOUR poor friend is scarce able to write—he has been at death's door this week with a plurisy —I was bled three times on Thursday, and blistered on Friday—The physician says I am better—God knows, for I feel myself sadly wrong, and shall, if I recover, be a long while of gaining strength. Before I have gone through half this letter, I must stop to rest my weak hand above a dozen times. Mr. J—— was so good to call upon me yesterday. I felt emotions not to be described at the sight of him, and he overjoyed me by talking a great deal of you. Do, dear Mrs. J—— entreat him to come to-morrow or next day, for perhaps I have not many days or hours to live—I want to ask a favor of him, if I find myself worse —that I shall beg of you, if in this wrestling I come off conqueror—my spirits are fled—'tis a bad omen —do not weep, my dear lady—your tears are too precious to shed for me—bottle them up, and may the cork never be drawn. Dearest, kindest, gentlest, and best of women! may health, peace, and happiness prove your handmaids! If I die, cherish the remembrance of me, and forget the follies which you so often condemn'd—which my heart, not my head, betrayed me into. Should my child, my Lydia, want a mother, may I hope you will (if

she is left parentless) take her to your bosom;—You are the only woman on earth I can depend upon for such a benevolent action. I wrote to her a fortnight ago,* and told her what I trust she will find in you.—Mr. J—— will be a father to her—he will protect her from every insult, for he wears a sword which he has served his country with, and which he would know how to draw out of the scabbard in defence of innocence. Commend me to him—as I now commend you to that Being who takes under his care the good and kind part of the world. Adieu—All grateful thanks to you and Mr. J——.

Your poor affectionate friend,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXXIX.

TO **********.

——I BEHELD her tender look—her pathetic eye petrified my fluids—the liquid dissolution drowned those once bright orbs—the late sympathetic features, so pleasing in their harmony, are now blasted—withered—and are dead; her charms are dwindled into a melancholy which demands my pity—Yes—my friend—our once sprightly and vivacious Harriot is that very object that must

* From this circumstance it may be conjectured that this Letter was written on Tuesday the 8th of March, 1768, ten days before Mr. Sterne died.

thrill your soul. How abandoned is that heart which bulges the tear of innocence, and is the cause—the fatal cause of overwhelming the spotless soul, and plunging the yet-untainted mind into a sea of sorrow and repentance—Though born to protect the fair, does not man act the part of a demon?—first alluring by his temptations, and then triumphing in his victory—when villany gets the ascendancy, it seldom leaves the wretch till it has thoroughly polluted him——T*******, once the joyous companion of our juvenile extravagancies, by a deep-laid scheme, so far ingratiated himself into the good graces of the old man—that even he, with all his penetration and experience (of which old folks generally pique themselves), could not perceive his drift, and, like the goodness of his own heart, believed him honorable:—had I known his pretensions—I would have flown on the wings of friendship, of regard———of affection, and rescued the lovely innocent from the hands of the spoiler;—be not alarmed at my declaration—I have been long bound to her in the reciprocal bonds of affection;—but it is of a more delicate stamp than the gross materials nature has planted in us for procreation—I hope ever to retain the idea of innocence, and love her still:—I would love the whole sex were they equally deserving.

———— taking her by the hand—the other thrown round her waist—after an intimacy allowing such freedoms—with a look deceitfully pleasing, the villain poured out a torrent of protestations—and though oaths are sacred—swore with

all the fortitude of a conscientious man—the depth of his love—the height of his esteem—the strength of his attachment;—by these, and other artful means to answer his abandoned purpose (for which you know he is but too well qualified)—gained on the open inexperienced heart of the generous Harriot, and robbed her of her brightest jewel.—Oh! England! where are your senators?—where are your laws? Ye Heavens! where rests your deadly thunder;—why are your bolts restrained from overwhelming with vengeance this vile seducer?——I,—my friend, I, was the minister sent by justice to revenge her wrongs—revenge—I disclaim it—to redress her wrongs.—The news of affliction flies—I heard it, and posted to ****, where, forgetting my character—this is the style of the enthusiast—it most became my character—I saw him in his retreat—I flew out of the chaise—caught him by the collar—and in a tumult of passion—demanded—sure, if anger is excusable, it must be when it is excited by a detestation of vice—I demanded him to restore—alas! what was not in his power to return. Vengeance!—and shall these vermin—these spoilers of the fair—these murderers of the mind—lurk and creep about in dens secure to themselves, and pillage all around them? Distracted with my rage—I charged him with his crime—exploded his baseness—condemned his villany—while coward guilt sat on his sullen brow, and, like a criminal conscious of his deed, tremblingly pronounced his fear.—He hoped means might be found for a sufficient atonement—

offered a tender of his hand as a satisfaction, and a life devoted to her service as a recompense for his error. His humiliation struck me—'twas the only means he could have contrived to assuage my anger.——I hesitated—paused—thought—and still must think on so important a concern;—assist me —I am half afraid of trusting my Harriot in the hands of a man, whose character I too well know to be the antipodes of Harriot's—He all fire and dissipation;—she all meekness and sentiment!—nor can I think there is any hope of reformation:—the offer proceeds more from surprise, or fear, than justice and sincerity. The world—the world will exclaim, and my Harriot be a cast-off from society. Let her—I had rather see her thus, than miserably linked for life to a lump of vice. She shall retire to some corner of the world, and there weep out the remainder of her days in sorrow—forgetting the wretch who has abused her confidence, but ever remembering the friend who consoles her in retirement. You, my dear Charles, shall bear a part with me in the delightful task of whispering "peace to those who are in trouble, "and healing the broken in spirit."

Adieu.

LAURENCE STERNE.

LETTER CXXX.

TO THE SAME.

SIR,

I FEEL the weight of obligation which your friendship has laid upon me, and if it should never be in my power to make you a recompense, I hope you will be recompensed at the *resurrection of the just*.—I hope, Sir, we shall both be found in that catalogue;—and we are encouraged to hope, by the example of Abraham's faith, even *against hope*.—I think there is, at least, as much probability of our reaching, and rejoicing in the *haven where we would be*, as there was of the old Patriarch's having a child by his old wife.—There is not any person living or dead, whom I have so strong a desire to see and converse with as yourself:—indeed I have no inclination to visit, or say a syllable to but a few persons in this lower vale of vanity and tears, beside you;—but I often derive a peculiar satisfaction in conversing with the ancient and modern dead,—who yet live and speak excellently in their works. My neighbours think me *often alone*,—and yet at such times I am in company with more than five hundred mutes—each of whom, at my pleasure, communicates his ideas to me by dumb signs—quite as intelligibly as any person living can do by *uttering* of words. They always keep the distance from me which I direct,—and with a motion of my hand, I can bring them as near to me as I

please. I lay hands on fifty of them sometimes in an evening, and handle them as I like:—they never complain of ill-usage,—and when dismissed from my presence,—though ever so abruptly—take no offence. Such convenience is not to be enjoyed—nor such liberty to be taken with the living:—we are bound—in point of good manners, to admit all our pretended friends when they knock for an entrance, and dispense with all the nonsense or impertinence which they broach till they think proper to withdraw: nor can we take the liberty of humbly and decently opposing their sentiments, without exciting their disgust, and being in danger of their splenetic representation after they have left us.

I am weary of talking to the *many*—who though quick of hearing—are so *slow of heart to believe*—propositions which are next to self-evident;—you and I were not cast in *one mould*,—corporal comparison will attest it, and yet we are fashioned so much alike, that we may pass for twins:—were it possible to take an inventory of all our sentiments and feelings—just and unjust—holy and impure—there would appear as little difference between them as there is between instinct and reason,—or wit and madness: the barriers which separate these—like the real essence of bodies—escape the piercing eye of metaphysics, and cannot be pointed out more clearly than geometricians define a straight line, which is said to have length without breadth.——O ye learned anatomical aggregates, who pretend to instruct other aggregates! be as candid as the

sage whom ye pretend to revere—and tell them, that all you know is, that you know nothing!

——— I have a *mort* to communicate to you on different subjects—my mountain will be in labour till I see you—and then—what then?—why you must expect to see it bring forth—a mouse,—I therefore beseech you to have a watchful eye to the cats!—but it is said that mice were designed to be killed by cats!—cats to be worried by dogs, &c. &c.—This may be true—and I think I am made to be killed by my cough,—which is a perpetual plague to me; what, in the name of sound lungs, has my cough to do with you—or—you with my cough?

I am, Sir, with the most perfect affection and esteem,

Your humble Servant,

LAURENCE STERNE.

LETTER CXXXI.

TO ****.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received your kind letter of critical, and, I will add, of parental advice, which, contrary to my natural humour, set me upon looking gravely for half a day together: sometimes I concluded you had not spoke out, but had stronger grounds for your hints and cautions than what your good-

nature knew how to tell me, especially with regard to prudence, as a divine; and that you thought in your heart the vein of humour too free for the solemn colour of my coat. A meditation upon Death had been a more suitable trimming to it, I own; but then it could not have been set on by me. Mr. F—, whom I regard in the class I do you, as my best of critics and well-wishers, preaches daily to me on the same text: "Get your prefer-"ment first, Lory," he says, "and then write "and welcome." But suppose preferment is long a-coming—and for aught I know, I may not be preferred till the resurrection of the just—and am all that time in labour, how must I bear my pains? Like pious divines? or rather like able philosophers, knowing that one passion is only to be combated with another? But to be serious (if I can); I will use all reasonable caution—only with this caution along with it, not to spoil my book, that is the air and originality of it, which must resemble the author; and I fear it is the number of these slighter touches, which make the resemblance, and identify it from all others of the same stamp, which this understrapping virtue of prudence would oblige me to strike out.—A very able critic, and one of my colour too, who has read over Tristram, made answer, upon my saying I would consider the colour of my coat as I corrected it, that that idea in my head would render my book not worth a groat. —Still I promise to be cautious; but deny I have gone as far as Swift: he keeps a due distance from Rabelais; I keep a due distance from him. Swift

has said a hundred things I durst not say, unless I was Dean of St. Patrick's.

I like your caution, "ambitiosa recides orna-"menta." As I revise my book, I will shrive my conscience upon that sin, and whatever ornaments are of that kind shall be defaced without mercy. Ovid is justly censured for being "ingenii sui "amator;" and it is a reasonable hint to me as I'm not sure I am clear of it. To sport too much with your wit, or the game that wit has pointed out, is surfeiting; like toying with a man's mistress, it may be very delightful solacement to the inamorato, but little to the bye-stander. Though I plead guilty to part of the charge, yet it would greatly alleviate the crime, if my readers knew how much I have suppressed of this device. I have burnt more wit than I have published, on that very account, since I began to avoid the fault, I fear, I may yet have given proofs of.—I will reconsider Slop's fall, and my too minute description of it; but, in general, I am persuaded that the happiness of the Cervantic humour arises from this very thing,—of describing silly and trifling events with the circumstantial pomp of great ones. Perhaps this is overloaded, and I can ease it.—I have a project of getting Tristram put into the hands of the Archbishop, if he comes down this autumn, which will ease my mind of all trouble upon the topic of discretion.

I am, &c.

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXXXII.

TO MR. B.

SIR, Exeter, July, 1675.

THE inclosed was quite an *Impromptu* of Yorick's after he had been thoroughly *soused*.—He drew it up in a few moments without stopping his pen. I should be glad to see it in your intended collection of Mr. Sterne's memoirs, &c. If you should have a copy of it, you will be able to rectify a misapplication of a term that Mr. Sterne could never be guilty of, as one great excellence of his writing lies in the most happy choice of metaphors and allusions—such as shewed his philosophic judgment, at the same time that they display his wit and genius—but it is not for me to comment on, or correct so great an original. I should have sent this fragment as soon as I saw Mrs. Medalle's advertisement, had I not been at a distance from my papers. I expect much entertainment from this posthumous work of a man to whom no one is more indebted for amusement and instruction, than,

Sir,

Your humble servant,

S. P.

AN IMPROMPTU.

No—not one farthing would I give for such a coat in wet weather, or dry.—If the sun shines, you are sure of being melted, because it closes so tight about one—if it rains, it is no more a defence than a cobweb—a very sieve, o' my conscience! that lets through every drop, and, like many other things that are put on only for a cover, mortifies you with disappointment, and makes you curse the impostor, when it is too late to avail one's self of the discovery. Had I been wise, I should have examined the claim the coat had to the title of "defender of the body"—before I had trusted my body in it—I should have held it up to the light, like other suspicious matters, to have seen how much it was likely to admit of that which I wanted to keep out—whether it was no more than such a frail, flimsy, contexture of flesh and blood, as I am fated to carry about with me through every tract of this dirty world, could have comfortably and safely dispensed with in so short a journey—taking into my account the chance of spreading trees—thick hedges o'erhanging the road—with twenty other coverts that a man may trust his head under—if he is not violently pushed on by that d—d stimulus—you know where—that will not let a man sit still in one place for half a minute together—but, like a young mettlesome tit, is eternally on the fret, and is for pushing

on still farther—or if the poor scared devil is not hunted tantivy by a hue and cry with gyves and a halter dangling before his eyes—now in either case he has not a minute to throw away in standing still, but, like King Lear, must brave "the peltings of a pitiless storm," and give Heaven leave to "rumble its belly-full—spit fire—or "spout rain"—as spitefully as it pleaseth, without finding the inclination or the resolution to slacken his pace, lest something should be lost that might have been gained, or more gotten than he well knows how to get rid of.—Now had I acted with as much prudence as some other good folks—I could name many of them who have been made b—ps within my remembrance, for having been hooded and muffled up in a larger quantity of this dark drab of mental manufacture than ever fell to my share—and absolutely for nothing else—as will be seen when they are undressed another day—Had I had but as much as might have been taken out of their cloth, without lessening much of the size, or injuring the least the shape, or contracting aught of the doublings and foldings, or confining to a less circumference the superb sweep of any one cloak that any one b—p ever wrapt himself up in—I should never have given this coat a place upon my shoulders. I should have seen by the light, at one glance, how little it would keep out of rain, by how little it would keep in of darkness.—This a coat for a rainy day? do pray, madam, hold it up to that window—did you ever see such an *illustrious* coat since the day you could distinguish between a coat

and a pair of breeches?—My lady did not understand derivatives, and so she could not see quite through my splendid pun. Pope Sixtus would have blinded her with the same "darkness of ex-"cessive light." What a flood of it breaks in through this rent? what an irradiation beams through that? what twinklings—what sparklings as you wave it before your eyes in the broad face of the sun? Make a fan out of it for the ladies to look at their gallants with at church—It has not served me for one purpose—it will serve them for two—This is coarse stuff—of worse manufacture than the cloth—put it to its proper use, for I love when things sort and join well—make a philtre* of it while there is a drop to be extracted—I know but one thing in the world that will draw, drain, or suck like it—and that is—neither wool nor flax—make—make any thing of it, but a vile, hypocritical coat for me—for I never can say, *sub Jove*, (whatever Juno might) that "it is a pleasure to "be wet."

L. STERNE.

* This allusion is improper. A philtre originally signifies a love-potion—and as it is used as a noun from the verb *philtrate*, it must signify a *strainer*, not a *sucker*—cloth is sometimes used for the purpose of *draining*, by means of its pores or capillary tubes, but its action is contrary to philtration. His meaning is obvious enough: but as he drew up this fragment without stopping his pen, as I was informed, it is no wonder he erred in the application of some of his terms.

THE

FRAGMENT.

CHAP. I.

Shewing two Things; first, what a Rabelaic Fellow LONGINUS RABELAICUS *is; and, secondly, how cavalierly he begins his Book.*

MY dear and thrice reverend brethren, as well Archbishops and Bishops, as the *rest* of the inferior clergy! would it not be a glorious thing, if any man of genius and capacity amongst us for such a work, was fully bent within himself to sit down immediately and compose a thorough-stitched system of the KERUKOPAEDIA, fairly setting forth, to the best of his wit and memory, and collecting for that purpose all that is needful to be known and understood of that art?——Of what art? cried PANURGE. Good God! answered LONGINUS, (making an exclamation, but taking care at the same time to moderate his voice,) why, of the art of making all kinds of your theological, hebdodomical, rostrummical, humdrummical what-d'ye-call-ems—I will be shot, quoth EPISTEMON, if all this story of thine of a roasted horse, is simply no more than S—— Sausages! quoth PANURGE. Thou hast fallen twelve feet and about

five inches below the mark, answered EPISTEMON, for I hold them to be *Sermons*—which said word (as I take the matter) being but a word of low degree, for a book of high rhetoric—LONGINUS RABELAICUS was fore-minded to usher and lead in his dissertation, with as much pomp and parade as he could afford;—and for my own part, either I know no more of Latin than my horse, or the KERUKOPAEDIA is nothing but the art of making 'em—And why not, quoth GYMNAST, of preaching them when we have done?—Believe me, dear souls, this is half in half—and if some skilful body would but put us in a way to do this to some *tune*—Thou wouldst not have them *chanted* surely? quoth TRIBOULET, laughing.—No, nor *canted* neither! quoth GYMNAST, crying—but what I mean, my friends, says LONGINUS RABELAICUS (who is certainly one of the greatest critics in the western world, and as Rabelaic a fellow as ever existed)—what I mean, says he, interrupting them both, and resuming his discourse, is this, that if all the scatter'd rules of the KERUKOPAEDIA could be but once carefully collected into one code, as thick as PANURGE's head, and the whole *cleanly* digested—(pooh, says PANURGE, who felt himself aggrieved)—and bound up, continued LONGINUS, by way of a regular institute, and then put into the hands of every licensed preacher in Great-Britain, and Ireland, just before he began to compose, I maintain it—I deny it flatly, quoth PANURGE—What? answered LONGINUS RABELAICUS, with all the temper in the world.

CHAP. II.

In which the Reader will begin to form a Judgment of what an Historical, Dramatical, Anecdotical, Allegorical, and Comical Kind of a Work he has got hold of.

HOMENAS, who had to preach next Sunday (before God knows whom), knowing nothing at all of the matter—was all this while at it as hard as he could drive in the very next room:—for, having fouled two clean sheets of his own, and being quite stuck fast in the entrance upon his third general *division*, and finding himself unable to get either forwards or backwards with any grace—"Curse it," says he (thereby excommunicating every mother's son who should think differently), "why may not a man lawfully call in for help in "this, as well as any other human emergency?"—So without any more argumentation, except starting up and nimming down from the top shelf but one, the second volume of CLARK—though without any felonious intention in so doing, he had begun to clap me in (making a joint first) five whole pages, nine round paragraphs, and a dozen and a half of good thoughts all of a row; and because there was a confounded high gallery—was transcribing it away like a little devil.—Now—quoth HOMENAS to himself, "though I hold all "this to be fair and square, yet, if I am found out, "there will be the deuce and all to pay."—*Why*

are the bells ringing backwards, you lad? what is all that crowd about, honest man? HOMENAS *was got upon Doctor* CLARK'S *back, sir—and what of that, my lad? Why, an' please you, he has broke his neck, and fractured his skull, and befouled himself into the bargain, by a fall from the pulpit two stories high.* Alas! poor HOMENAS! HOMENAS has done his business!—HOMENAS will never preach more while breath is in his body.—No, faith, I shall never again be able to tickle it off as I have done. I may sit up whole winter nights baking my blood with hectic watchings, and write as solid as a FATHER of the church ——or I may sit down whole summer days, evaporating my spirits into the finest thoughts, and write as florid as a MOTHER of it.—In a word, I may compose myself off my legs, and preach till I burst—and when I have done, it will be worse than if not done at all.—*Pray, Mr. Such-a-one who held forth last Sunday? Doctor* CLARK, *I trow, says one. Pray what Doctor* CLARK? *says a second: Why* HOMENAS'S *Doctor* CLARK, *quoth a third.* O rare HOMENAS! cries a fourth; your *servant*, Mr. HOMENAS, quoth a *fifth.*—'Twill be all over with me, by Heaven—I may as well put the book from whence I took it.—Here HOMENAS burst into a flood of tears, which falling down helter skelter, ding dong, without any kind of intermission for six minutes and almost twenty-five seconds, had a marvellous effect upon his discourse; for the aforesaid tears, do you mind, did so temper the wind that was rising upon the

aforesaid discourse, but falling for the most part perpendicularly, and hitting the spirits at right angles, which were mounting horizontally all over the surface of his harangue, they not only played the devil and all with the sublimity—but moreover the said tears, by their nitrous quality, did so refrigerate, precipitate, and hurry down to the bottom of his soul, all the unsavoury particles which lay fermenting (as you saw) in the middle of his conception, that he went on in the coolest and chastest style (for a *soliloquy*, I think) that ever mortal man uttered.

"This is really and truly a very hard case," continued HOMENAS to himself—PANURGE, by the bye, and all the company in the next room, hearing all along every syllable he spoke! for you must know, that notwithstanding PANURGE had opened his mouth as wide as he could for his blood, in order to give a round answer to LONGINUS RABELAICUS's interrogation, which concluded the last chapter—yet HOMENAS's rhetoric had poured in so like a torrent, slapdash through the wainscot amongst them, and happening at that *uncritical* crisis when PANURGE had just put his ugly face into the above-said posture of defence—that he stopt short—he did indeed, and, though his head was full of matter, and he had screwed up every nerve and muscle belonging to it, till all cried *crack* again, in order to give a due projectile force to what he was going to let fly full in LONGINUS RABELAICUS's teeth, who sat over against him—Yet for all that, he had the continence to contain

himself, for he stopt short, I say, without uttering one word except Z——ds—Many reasons may be assigned for this, but the most true, the most strong, the most hydrostatical, and the most philosophical reason, why PANURGE did not go on, was—that the fore-mentioned *torrent* did not so *drown* his voice that he had none left to go on with.—God help him, poor fellow! so he stopt short (as I have told you before), and all the time HOMENAS was speaking, he said not another word, good or bad, but stood gaping and staring, like what you please—so that the break, marked thus—which HOMENAS's grief had made in the middle of his discourse, which he could no more help than he could fly—produced no other change in the room where LONGINUS RABELAICUS, EPISTEMON, GYMNAST, TRIBOULET, and nine or ten more honest blades had got Kerukopaedizing together, but that it gave time to GYMNAST to give PANURGE a good squashing chuck under his double chin; which PANURGE taking in good part, and just as it was meant by GYMNAST, he forthwith shut his mouth—and gently sitting down upon a stool, though somewhat eccentrically and out of neighbour's row, but listening as all the rest did with might and main, they plainly and distinctly heard every syllable of what you will find recorded in the very next chapter.

THE

HISTORY

OF A

*GOOD WARM WATCH-COAT,**

WITH WHICH THE PRESENT POSSESSOR

IS NOT CONTENT TO COVER HIS OWN SHOULDERS,

Unless he can cut out of it

A Petticoat for his Wife, and a Pair of Breeches for his Son.

A POLITICAL ROMANCE.

SIR

IN my last, for want of something better to write about, I told you what a world of fending and

* As the following piece was suppressed during the life-time of Mr. Sterne, and as there are some grounds to believe that it was not intended by him for publication, an apology may be deemed necessary for inserting it in the present edition of his Works. It must be acknowledged, that a mere *jeu d'esprit* relating to a private dispute, which could interest only a few, and which was intended to divert a small circle of friends, was with great propriety concealed while it might tend to revive departed animosities, or give pain to any of the persons who were concerned in so trifling a contest. And these considerations seem to have had weight with those to whom the MS. was intrusted; it not having been made public until many years after it was written, nor until most of the gentlemen mentioned in it were dead. After the lapse of more than twenty years, it may be presumed that there can be no impropriety in giving one of the earliest of Mr. Sterne's *bagatelles* a place among his more important performances. The slightest sketches of a genius are too valuable to be neglected: and the present edition would be incomplete, if this composition, written immediately before Tristram Shandy, and which

proving we have had of late in this little village* of ours, about an old cast pair of black plush breeches,† which *John*,‡ our parish-clerk, about ten years ago, it seems, had made a promise of to one *Trim*,§ who is our sexton and dog-whipper.—To this you write me word, that you have had more than either one or two occasions to know a great deal of the shifty behaviour of the said master *Trim*—and that you are astonished, nor can you for your soul conceive how so worthless a fellow, and so worthless a thing into the bargain, could become the occasion of so much racket as I have represented.—

Now, though you do not say expressly you could wish to hear any more about it, yet I see plainly enough I have raised your curiosity; and therefore, from the same motive that I slightly mentioned it at all in my last letter, I will in this give you a full and very circumstantial account of the whole affair.

But, before I begin, I must first set you right in

may be considered as the precursor of it, was omitted. As the whole of it alludes to facts and circumstances confined to the city of York, it will be necessary to observe, that it was occasioned by a controversy between Dr. Fountayne and Dr. Topham, in the year 1758, on a charge made by the latter against the former, of a breach of promise, in withholding from him some preferment which he had reason to expect. For the better illustration of this little Satire, a few notes are added, from the pamphlets which appeared while this insignificant difference was agitating.

* York.

† The Commissaryship of Pickering and Pocklington.

‡ Dr. John Fountayne, Dean of York.

§ Dr. Topham.

one very material point, in which I have misled you, as to the true cause of all this uproar amongst us—which does not take its rise, as I then told you, from the affair of the breeches, but, on the contrary, the whole affair of the breeches has taken its rise from it.—To understand which, you must know, that the first beginning of the squabble was not betwixt *John* the parish-clerk, and *Trim* the sexton, but betwixt the parson* of the parish and the said master *Trim*, about an old *watch-coat*,† that had hung up many years in the church, which *Trim* had set his heart upon; and nothing would serve *Trim*, but he must take it home; in order to have it converted into a *warm under-petticoat* for his wife; and a *jerkin* for himself, against winter, which, in a plaintive tone, he most humbly begged his reverence would consent to.

I need not tell you, Sir, who have so often felt it, that a principle of strong compassion transports a generous mind sometimes beyond what is strictly right;—the parson was within an ace of being an honorable example of this very crime—for no sooner did the distinct words—*petticoat—poor wife—warm—winter*, strike upon his ear—but his heart warmed—and before *Trim* had well got to the end of his petition (being a gentleman of a frank open temper) he told him he was welcome to it with all his heart and soul.—But *Trim*, says

* Dr. Hutton, Archbishop of York.

† A patent place, in the gift of the Archbishop, which had been given to Dr. Topham for his life, and which, in 1758, he solicited to have granted to one of his family after his death.

he, as you see I am but just got down to my living, and am an utter stranger to all parish matters, knowing nothing about this old watch-coat you beg of me, having never seen it in my life, and therefore cannot be a judge whether 'tis fit for such a purpose, or if it is, in truth know not whether tis mine to bestow upon you or not—you must have a week or ten days patience, till I can make some enquiries about it—and, if I find it is in my power, I tell you again, man, your wife is heartily welcome to an under-petticoat out of it, and you to a jerkin, was the thing as good again as you represent it.

It is necessary to inform you, Sir, in this place, that the parson was earnestly bent to serve *Trim* in this affair, not only from the motive of generosity which I have justly ascribed to him, but likewise from another motive, and that was by making some sort of recompense for a multitude of small services which *Trim* had occasionally done, and indeed was continually doing (as he was much about the house), when his own man was out of the way.—For all these reasons together, I say, the parson of the parish intended to serve *Trim* in this matter to the utmost of his power. All that was wanting, was, previously to enquire if any one had a *claim* to it, or whether, as it had time immemorial hung up in the church, the taking it down might not raise a clamour in the parish. These enquiries were the things that *Trim* dreaded in his heart—he knew very well, that, if the parson should but say one word to the churchwardens

about it, there would be an end of the whole affair. For this, and some other reasons not necessary to be told you at present, *Trim* was for allowing no time in this matter—but, on the contrary, doubled his diligence and importunity at the vicarage-house—plagued the whole family to death—prest his suit morning, noon, and night; and, to shorten my story, teased the poor gentleman, who was but in an ill state of health, almost out of his life about it.

You will not wonder when I tell you, that all this hurry and precipitation, on the side of master *Trim*, produced its natural effect on the side of the parson; and that was, a suspicion that all was not right at the bottom.

He was one evening sitting alone in his study, weighing and turning this doubt every way in his mind, and after an hour and a half's serious deliberation upon the affair, and running over *Trim's* behaviour throughout—he was just saying to himself—*it must be so*—when a sudden rap at the door put an end to his soliloquy, and in a few minutes to his doubts too; for a labourer in the town, who deemed himself past his fifty-second year, had been returned by the constables in the militia list—and he had come with a groat in his hand to search the parish-register for his age. The parson bid the poor fellow put the groat into his pocket, and go into the kitchen—then shutting the study-door, and taking down the parish register—*who knows*, says he, *but I may find something here about this self-same watch-coat?* He had scarce

unclasped the book, in saying this, when he popped on the very thing he wanted, fairly wrote in the first page, pasted to the inside of one of the covers whereon was a memorandum about the very thing in question, in these express words—*Memorandum.* "The great watch-coat was purchased "and given, above two hundred years ago, by the "Lord of the manor, to this parish-church, to the "sole use and behoof of the poor Sextons thereof, "and their successors for ever, to be worn by them "respectively in winterly cold nights, in ringing "*complines, passing bells, &c.* which the said lord "of the manor had done in pity to keep the poor "wretches warm, and for the good of his own "soul, for which they were directed to pray, &c." *Just Heaven!* said the parson to himself, looking upwards, *what an escape have I had! give this for an under-petticoat to* Trim's *wife? I would not have consented to such a desecration to be Primate of all* England—*nay, I would not have disturbed a single button of it for all my tithes.*

Scarce were the words out of his mouth, when in pops *Trim* with the whole subject of the exclamation under both his arms—I say under both his arms—for he had actually got it ript and cut out ready, his own jerkin under one arm, and the petticoat under the other, in order to carry to the taylor to be made up, and had just stepped in, in high spirits, to shew the parson how cleverly it had held out.

There are now many good similies subsisting in the world, but which I have time neither to recol-

lect or look for, which would give you a strong conception of the astonishment and honest indignation which this unexpected stroke of *Trim's* impudence impressed upon the parson's looks—let it suffice to say, that it exceeded all fair description—as well as all power of proper resentment——except this, that *Trim* was ordered, in a stern voice, to lay the bundles down upon the table—to go about his business, and wait upon him, at his peril, the next morning at eleven precisely.—Against this hour, like a wise man, the parson had sent to desire *John* the parish-clerk, who bore an exceeding good character, as a man of truth, and who, having moreover a pretty freehold of about eighteen pounds a year in the township, was a leading man in it; and upon the whole was such a one, of whom it might be said, that he rather did honor to his office than that his office did honor to him—him he sends for, with the churchwardens, and one of the sidesmen, a grave knowing old man, to be present—for, as *Trim* had with-held the whole truth from the parson touching the watch-coat, he thought it probable he would as certainly do the same thing to others. Though this, I said, was wise, the trouble of the precaution might have been spared—because the parson's character was unblemished—and he had ever been held by the world in the estimation of a man of honor and integrity. —*Trim's* character, on the contrary, was as well known, if not in the world, at least in all the parish, to be that of a little dirty, pimping, pettifogging, ambidextrous fellow—who neither cared

what he did or said of any, provided he could get a penny by it. This might, I said, have made any precaution needless—but you must know, as the parson had in a manner but just got down to his living, he dreaded the consequences of the least ill impression on his first entrance among his parishioners, which would have disabled him from doing them the good he wished—so that out of regard to his flock, more than the necessary care due to himself—he was resolved not to lie at the mercy of what resentment might vent, or malice lend an ear to.

Accordingly, the whole matter was rehearsed, from first to last, by the parson, in the manner I have told you, in the hearing of *John* the parish-clerk, and in the presence of *Trim*.

Trim had little to say for himself, except "that the parson had absolutely promised to befriend him and his wife in the affair to the utmost of his power; that the watch-coat was certainly in his power, and that he might still give it him if he pleased."

To this the parson's reply was short but strong, "that nothing was in his power to do, but what he could do *honestly*—that, in giving the coat to him and his wife, he should do a manifest wrong to the next sexton, the great watch-coat being the most comfortable part of the place—that he should moreover injure the right of his own successor, who would be just so much a worse patron as the worth of the coat amounted to; and, in a word, he declared, that his whole intent in promising that

coat, was charity to *Trim*, but *wrong* to no man—that was a reserve, he said, made in all cases of this kind: and he declared solemnly, *in verbo sacerdotis*, that this was his meaning, and was so understood by *Trim* himself."

With the weight of this truth, and the great good sense and strong reason which accompanied all the parson said on the subject—poor *Trim* was driven to his last shift—and begged he might be suffered to plead his right and title to the watch-coat, if not by *promise*, at least by *servitude*—it was well known how much he was entitled to it upon these scores: that he had blacked the parson's shoes without count, and greased his boots above fifty times—that he had run for eggs in the town upon all occasions—whetted the knives at all hours—catched his horse, and rubbed him down—that, for his wife, she had been ready upon all occasions to char for them; and neither he nor she, to the best of his remembrance, ever took a farthing, or any thing beyond a mug of ale.—To this account of his services, he begged leave to add those of his wishes, which, he said, had been equally great—he affirmed, and was ready he said to make it appear, by a number of witnesses, "he had drank his reverence's health a thousand times (by the bye he did not add out of the parson's own ale)—that he had not only drank his health, but wished it, and never came to the house but asked his man kindly how he did; that in particular about half a year ago, when his reverence cut his

finger in paring an apple, he went half a mile* to ask a cunning woman what was good to staunch blood, and actually returned with a cobweb in his breeches-pocket. Nay, says *Trim*, it was not a fortnight ago, when your reverence took that strong purge, that I went to the far end of the whole town to borrow you a close-stool—and came back, as the neighbours who flouted me will all bear witness, with the pan upon my head, and never thought it too much." *Trim* concluded this pathetic remonstrance, with saying, "he hoped his reverence's heart would not suffer him to requite so many faithful services by so unkind a return:—that if it was so, as he was the first, so he hoped he should be the last example of a man of his condition so treated."—This plan of *Trim's* defence, which *Trim* had put himself upon, could admit of no other reply than a general smile.—Upon the whole, let me inform you, that all that could be said *pro* and *con*, on both sides, being fairly heard, it was plain that *Trim* in every part of this affair had behaved very ill—and one thing, which was never expected to be known of him, happened in the course of this debate to come out against him, namely, that he had gone and told the parson, before he had ever set foot in his parish,† that *John*

* "Long before any thing of my patent was thought of, I not only "most sincerely lamented the Archbishop's illness, but made it my "business to enquire after every place and remedy that might help "his Grace in his complaint."—Extract of a Letter from Dr. Topham, p. 26, of *Dr. Fountayne's Answer.*

† In Dr. Fountayne's Pamphlet, page 18 and 19, Dr. Topham is

his parish-clerk—his church-wardens, and some of the heads of the parish, were a parcel of scoundrels.—Upon the upshot, *Trim* was kick'd out of doors, and told at his peril never to come there again.

At first *Trim* huffed and bounced most terribly—swore he would get a warrant—that nothing would serve him but he would call a bye-law, and tell the whole parish how the parson had misused him; but cooling of that, as fearing the parson might possibly bind him over to his good behaviour, and, for aught he knew, might send him to the house of correction, he lets the parson alone, and to revenge himself falls foul upon the clerk, who has no more to do in the quarrel than you or I—rips up the promise of the old—cast—pair of black—plush—breeches; and raises an uproar in the town about it, notwithstanding it had slept ten years—but all this, you must know, is looked upon in no other light but as an artful stroke of generalship in *Trim* to raise a dust, and cover himself under the disgraceful chastisement he has undergone.——

If your curiosity is not yet satisfied—I will now proceed to relate the *battle* of the *breeches* in the same exact manner I have done that of the watch-coat.——

Be it known then, that about ten years ago,

charged with having assured Archbishop Hutton, before he came into the Diocese, that the Dean and Chapter of York were a set of *strange people*, and that he would find it *very difficult*, if *not impossible*, to live upon good terms with them.

when *John* was appointed parish-clerk of this church, this said *Trim* took no small pains to get into *John's* good graces, in order, as it afterwards appeared, to coax a promise out of him of a pair of breeches, which *John* had then by him, of black plush, not much the worse for wearing—*Trim* only begged, for God's sake, to have them bestowed upon him when *John* should think fit to cast them.

Trim was one of those kind of men who loved a bit of finery in his heart, and would rather have a tatter'd rag of a better body's, than the best plain whole thing his wife could spin him.

John, who was naturally unsuspicious, made no more difficulty of promising the breeches than the parson had done in promising the great coat; and indeed with something less reserve—because the breeches were *John's own*, and he could give them, without wrong, to whom he thought fit.

It happened, I was going to say unluckily, but I should rather say most luckily for *Trim*, for he was the only gainer by it, that a quarrel, about some six or eight weeks after this, broke out betwixt *the* late* parson of the parish and *John* the clerk. Somebody (and it was thought to be nobody but *Trim*) had put it into the parson's head, "that *John's* desk† in the church was at the least four inches higher than it should be—that the

* Archbishop Herring.

† This alludes to the right of appointing preachers for the vacant stalls, which Dr. Fountayne, as Dean of York, claimed against the Archbishop.

thing gave offence, and was indecorous; inasmuch as it approached too near upon a level with the parson's desk itself."—This hardship the parson complained of loudly, and told *John*, one day after prayers, " he could bear it no longer—and would have it altered, and brought down as it should be." *John* made no other reply, but " that the desk was not of his raising: that 'twas not one hair breadth higher than he found it—and that as he found it so he would leave it. In short, he would neither make an encroachment, neither would he suffer one."—The *late* parson might have his virtues, but the leading part of his character was not *humility*—so that *John's* stiffness in this point was not likely to reconcile matters.—This was *Trim's* harvest.

After a friendly hint to *John* to stand his ground, away hies *Trim* to make his market at the vicarage.—What passed there I will not say, intending not to be uncharitable; so shall content myself with only guessing at it from the sudden change that appeared in *Trim's* dress for the better—for he had left his old ragged coat, hat, and wig, in the stable, and was come forth strutting across the church-yard yclad in a good charitable cast coat, large hat, and wig, which the parson had just given him.—Ho! ho! hollo! *John*, cries *Trim*, in an insolent bravo, as loud as ever he could bawl—see here, my lad, how fine I am.—The more shame for you, answered *John* seriously—Do you think, *Trim*, says he, such finery, gained by such services, becomes you, or can wear

well?—Fye upon it, *Trim*, I could not have expected this from you, considering what friendship you pretended, and how kind I have ever been to you—how many shillings and sixpences I have generously lent you in your distresses.—Nay, it was but the other day that I promised you these black plush breeches I have on.—Rot your breeches, quoth *Trim* (for *Trim*'s brain was half turn'd with his new finery,) rot your breeches, says he—I would not take them up were they laid at my door—give them, and be d——d to you, to whom you like—I would have you to know I can have a better pair of the parson's any day in the week——*John* told him plainly, as his word had once passed him, he had a spirit above taking advantage of his insolence in giving them away to another—but, to tell him his mind freely, he thought he had got so many favors of that kind, and was so likely to get many more for the same services, of the parson, that he had better give up the breeches, with good nature, to some one who would be more thankful for them.

Here *John* mentioned *Mark* * *Slender* (who it seems the day before had asked *John* for them), not knowing they were under promise to *Trim*—"Come, *Trim*," says he, "let poor *Mark* have "them—you know he has not a pair to his a——, "besides, you see, he is just of my size, and they "will fit to a T, whereas if I give 'em to you, look "ye, they are not worth much, and besides you

* Dr. Braithwaite.

" could not get your backside into them, if you " had them, without tearing them all to pieces." —Every tittle of this was most undoubtedly true, for *Trim*, you must know, by foul-feeding, and playing the goodfellow at the parson's, was grown somewhat gross about the lower parts, *if not higher;* so that, as all *John* said upon the occasion was fact, *Trim* with much ado, and after a hundred hums and hahs, at last, out of mere compassion to *Mark*, *signs*,* *seals*, *and delivers up* ALL RIGHT, INTEREST, AND PRETENSIONS WHATSOEVER IN AND TO THE SAID BREECHES, THEREBY BINDING HIS HEIRS, EXECUTORS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND ASSIGNS, NEVER MORE TO CALL THE SAID CLAIM IN QUESTION.— All this renunciation was set forth, in an ample manner, to be in pure pity to *Mark's* nakedness— but the secret was, *Trim* had an eye to, and firmly expected, in his own mind, the great green pulpit-cloth,†, and old velvet-cushion, which were that very year to be taken down—which, by the bye, could he have wheedled *John* a second time, as he had hoped, would have made up the loss of the breeches seven-fold.

* Extract of a letter from Dr. Topham to Dr. Fountayne: " As " Dr. Ward has proposed to resign the jurisdiction of Pickering and " Pocklington to Dr. Braithwaite, if you have not any other objec- " tion, I shall very readily give up what INTEREST arises to me in " these jurisdictions from your friendship and regard." P. 5, of *Dr. Fountayne's Answer to Dr. Topham.*

† The Commissaryship of Dean of York, and the Commissaryship of the Dean and Chapter of York.

Now you must know, this pulpit-cloth and cushion were not in *John*'s gift, but in the churchwardens',* &c. However, as I said above that *John* was a leading man in the parish, *Trim* knew he could help him to 'em if he would—but *John* had got a surfeit of him—so, when the pulpit-cloth, &c. were taken down, they were immediately given (*John* having a great say in it) to *William Doe*,† who understood very well what use to make of them.

As for the old breeches, poor *Mark* lived to wear them but a short time, and they got into the possession of *Lorry Slim*,‡ an unlucky wight, by whom they are still worn—in truth, as you will guess, they are very thin by this time.

But *Lorry* has a light heart, and what recommends them to him is this, that, as thin as they are, he knows that *Trim*, let him say what he will to the contrary, still envies the *possessor* of them, and with all his pride would be very glad to wear them after *him*.

Upon this footing have these affairs slept quietly for near ten years,—and would have slept for ever, but for the unlucky kicking bout, which, as I said, has ripped this squabble up afresh; so that it was no longer ago than last week, that *Trim* met and§

* The members of the Chapter.

† Mr. Stables.

‡ Mr. Sterne himself.

§ At the Sessions dinner, where Dr. Topham charged Dr. Fountayne with the breach of his promise, in giving the Commissaryship of Pocklington and Pickering to another person.

insulted *John* in the public town-way before a hundred people—tax'd him with the promise of the old cast pair of black breeches, notwithstanding *Trim*'s solemn renunciation—twitted him with the pulpit-cloth and velvet-cushion—as good as told him he was ignorant of the common duties of his clerkship; adding, very insolently, that he knew not so much as to give out a common psalm in tune.

John contented himself by giving a plain answer to every article that *Trim* had laid to his charge, and appealed to his neighbours who remembered the whole affair—and, as he knew there was never any thing to be got by wrestling with a chimney-sweeper, he was going to take his leave of *Trim* for ever. But hold—the mob by this time had got round them, and their high-mightinesses insisted upon having *Trim* tried upon the spot.

Trim was accordingly tried, and, after a full hearing, was convicted a second time, and handled more roughly by one or more of them than even at the parson's.——

Trim, says one, are you not ashamed of yourself to make all this rout and disturbance in the town, and set neighbours together by the ears, about an old—worn-out—pair of cast—breeches, not worth half-a-crown? Is there a cast coat, or a place in the whole town, that will bring you in a shilling, but what you have snapped up like a greedy hound as you are?

In the first place, are you not sexton and dog-

whipper,* worth three pounds a year? Then you begged the church-wardens to let your wife have the washing and darning of the church-linen, which brings you in thirteen shillings and four-pence; then you have six shillings and eight-pence for oiling and winding-up the clock, both paid you at Easter—the pounder's place, which is worth forty shillings a-year, you have got that too—you are the bailiff, which the late parson got you, which brings you in forty shillings more.

Besides all this, you have six pounds a-year paid you quarterly for being mole-catcher to the parish. Aye, says the luckless wight above-mentioned (who was standing close by him with the plush breeches on), "you are not only mole-catcher, "*Trim*, but you catch *STRAY CONIES* too in "the *dark*, and you pretend a licence for it, which, "I trow, will be looked into at the next quarter-"sessions." I maintain it, I have a licence, says *Trim*, blushing as red as scarlet—I have a licence, and as I farm a warren in the next parish, I will catch conies every hour in the night. *You catch conies!* says a toothless old woman, just passing by.

* "In the first place, would any one imagine that Dr. Topham, "who was now Master of the Faculties—Commissary to the Arch-"bishop of York—Official to the Archdeacon of York—Official to "the Archdeacon of the East-Riding—Official to the Archdeacon of "Cleveland—Official to the peculiar jurisdiction of Howdenshire—"Official to the Precentor—Official to the Chancellor of the Church "of York—and Official to several of the Prebendaries thereof, could "accept of so poor an addition as a Commissaryship of five guineas "per annum?"—P. S. of *Dr. Fountayne's Answer to Dr. Topham*.

This set the mob a-laughing, and sent every man home in perfect good-humour, except *Trim*, who waddled very slowly off, with that kind of inflexible gravity only to be equalled by one animal in the creation, and surpassed by none.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

POSTSCRIPT.

I HAVE broke open my letter to inform you, that I missed the opportunity of sending it by the messenger, who I expected would have called upon me on his return through this village to York; so it has lain a week or ten days by me—I am not sorry for the disappointment, because something has since happened in continuation of this affair, which I am thereby enabled to transmit to you all under one trouble.

When I finished the above account, I thought (as did every soul in the parish) *Trim* had met with so thorough a rebuff from *John*, the parish-clerk, and the town's-folks, who all took against him, that *Trim* would be glad to be quiet, and let the matter rest.

But, it seems, it is not half an hour ago since *Trim** sallied forth again, and, having borrowed a sow-gelder's horn, with hard-blowing he got the whole town round him, and endeavoured to raise a disturbance, and fight the whole battle over again—alleged that he had been used in the last fray worse than a dog, not by *John*, the parish-clerk, for I should not, quoth *Trim*, have valued him a rush single hands—but all the town sided with him, and twelve men in *buckram*† set upon me, all at

* Alluding to Dr. Topham's Reply to Dr. Fountayne's Answer.

† In Dr. Topham's Reply, he asserts, that Dr. Fountayne's Answer was *the child and offspring of many parents*, p. 1.

once, and kept me in play at sword's point for three hours together.

Besides, quoth *Trim*, there were two misbegotten knaves in *Kendal-green*, who lay all the while in ambush in *John*'s own house, and they all sixteen came upon my back, and let drive at me all together—a plague, says *Trim*, of all cowards.

Trim repeated his story above a dozen times, which made some of the neighbours pity him, thinking the poor fellow crack-brain'd, and that he actually believed what he said.

After this *Trim* dropped the affair of the breeches, and began a fresh dispute about the reading-desk, which I told you had occasioned some small dispute between the *late* parson and *John*, some years ago.—This reading-desk, as you will observe, was but an episode wove into the main story by the bye, for the main affair was *the battle of the breeches and the great-coat.*

However, *Trim* being at last driven out of these two citadels—he has seized hold, in his retreat, of this reading-desk, with a view, as it seems, to take shelter behind it.

I cannot say but the man has fought it out obstinately enough; and had his cause been good, I should have really pitied him. For, when he was driven out of the *great watch-coat*, you see he did not run away; no—he retreated behind the breeches, and when he could make nothing of it

behind the breeches, he got behind the reading-desk. To what other hold *Trim* will next retreat, the politicians of this village are not agreed. Some think his next move will be towards the rear of the parson's boot; but as it is thought he cannot make a long stand there, others are of opinion, that *Trim* will once more in his life get hold of the parson's horse, and charge upon him, or perhaps behind him; but as the horse is not easy to be caught, the more general opinion is, that, when he is driven out of the reading-desk, he will make his last retreat in such a manner as, if possible, to gain the *close-stool*, and defend himself behind it to the very last drop.

If *Trim* should make this movement, by my advice he should be left, beside his citadel, in full possession of the field of battle, where 'tis certain he will keep every body a league off, and may hop by himself till he is weary. Besides, as *Trim* seems bent upon *purging* himself, and may have abundance of foul humours to work off, I think he cannot be better placed.

But this is all matter of speculation—Let me carry you back to matter of fact, and tell you what kind of stand *Trim* has actually made behind the said desk: "Neighbours and townsmen all, I will be sworn before my Lord Mayor, that *John* and his nineteen men in *buckram* have abused me worse than a dog, for they told you that I played fast and go loose with the *late* parson and him in that old dispute of theirs about the *reading-desk*, and that

I made matters worse between them, and not better.

Of this charge *Trim* declared he was as innocent as the child that was unborn—that he would be book-sworn he had no hand in it.

He produced a strong witness, and moreover insinuated, that *John* himself, instead of being angry for what he had done in it, had actually thanked him—Aye, *Trim*, says the wight in the plush breeches, but that was, *Trim*, the day before *John* found thee out. Besides, *Trim*, there is nothing in that, for the very year that you was made town's pounder, thou knowest well that I both thanked thee myself, and moreover gave thee a good warm supper for turning *John Lund*'s cows and horses out of my hard corn close, which if thou hadst not done (as thou toldst me), I should have lost my whole crop; whereas *John Lund* and *Thomas Patt*, who are both here to testify, and are both willing to take their oaths on't, that thou thyself wast the very man who set the gate open—and after all, it was not thee, *Trim*, 'twas the blacksmith's poor lad who turned them out—so that a man may be thanked and rewarded too for a good turn which he never did, nor ever did intend.

Trim could not sustain this unexpected stroke—so *Trim* marched off the field without colours flying, or his horn sounding, or any other ensigns of honor whatever.—Whether after this *Trim* intends to rally a second time—or whether he may not take it into his head to claim the victory—none but *Trim* himself can inform you.

However, the general opinion upon the whole is this, that in three several pitch'd battles, *Trim* has been so *trimm'd* as never disastrous hero was *trimm'd* before.

THE END.

W. Lewis, Printer, 21, Finch-lane, Cornhill.

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